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Representative
ENGLISH DRAMAS
from
DRYDEN to SHERIDAN

Edited by
FREDERICK TUPPER
and
JAMES W. TUPPER

New and Enlarged Edition

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

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PREFACE

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THIS book is designed for students rather than for scholars or specialists. It makes little or no contribution to the present knowledge of authors and their plays. It grapples with no difficult problems of origins and solves no riddles of dramatic evolution. It enters into no competition with histories of the English drama or with recent studies and editions of the several authors. Its mission is the humble one of presenting in a single volume representative plays of the century and more between the Restoration of the Stuarts and the American Revolution. The introductions to the eighteen dramas and the notes and bibliographies at the end of the book contain only such information as the editors deem necessary for an understanding of the circumstances of this literary output, only such interpretative comment as they consider stimulating to the reader's own critical sense. With regard to the necessity and stimulus of this editorial matter, others may well be of a different mind.

After all, the plays are the thing. The dozen of an older edition have been increased by one-half. But why the eighteen here selected? The editors have been guided in their choice early and late, not by their own likes and dislikes, which happen to be strong, but by the consensus of critical and popular opinion. *The Conquest of Granada* is acknowledged by all as typical of the short-lived heroic drama. Recent judgment finds in that remaking of Molière, *The Country Wife,* a masterpiece in which the whole gallery of Restoration figures is revealed with Wycherley's scathing irony. *The Man of Mode* of Etherege is applauded by editors not merely as the initiator of the Fopling tradition, but as a leader among comedies in its realistic representation of contemporary society. *All for Love* is deemed Dryden's best tragedy and furnishes in addition the most striking example of the Restoration treatment of a Shakespearean theme. Otway's *Venice Preserved* is reckoned easily first among the tragedies of the later Stuart time; indeed it finds no peer until Shelley's *Cenci.* The ubiquitous *Rehearsal* of Buckingham has yielded—here the editors accept full responsibility—to the less accessible, equally representative, and more amusing burlesque, Fielding's *Tom Thumb. Love's Last Shift* offers a fruitful study in the succession of literary *genres,* since Cibber is barely off with the old love of comic levity and hardly on with the new of sentimental gravity. Its sequel, Vanbrugh's drama, *The Relapse,* displays a loyalty to the conventions of Restoration comedy so staunch that author and play bore the brunt of Collier's famous attack upon the stage. No English comedy of manners vies, in the judgment of many others than Meredith, with *The Way of the World* by Congreve. No lighter drama of the Restoration

tradition has had longer life on the stage and off than that "red leaf, the last of its clan," Farquhar's often-dancing *Beaux' Stratagem.* Dull beyond all conception Addison's *Cato* may seem to us now, yet it scored the most signal triumph of eighteenth-century classical tragedy. That pathetic farewell to mirth, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore,* "fully established Nicholas Rowe at the head of Augustan dramatists." Sentimental comedy must be represented, and —almost as a matter of course—by *The Conscious Lovers* of Steele. *The Beggar's Opera* by Gay is the foremost of its musical *genre* in both time and merit. *The London Merchant* of George Lillo, says a recent voice of authority, "marked the downfall of the classical tragedy, drove outworn themes from the stage and established the basis of the modern theatre." Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* and Sheridan's chief comedies, *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal,* were sure of their place. Indeed, the selection of all these eighteen plays was so obvious as to demand little discrimination.

The text of each play has been derived from a careful comparison of the earliest quartos with the latest and most scholarly editions; but the present editors have unhesitatingly omitted the so-called "critical apparatus" of variant readings and proposed emendations, for the same reason that they have shunned archaic spelling and pointing—as being entirely out of keeping with the design of the book.

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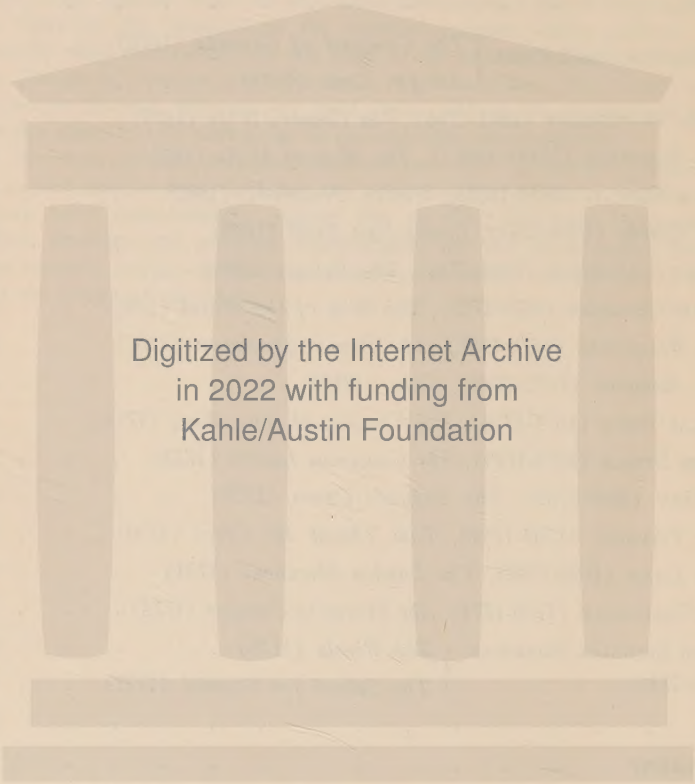

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REPRESENTATIVE ENGLISH DRAMAS FROM DRYDEN TO SHERIDAN

JOHN DRYDEN

THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA

JOHN DRYDEN was born of good, vigorous Puritan stock on August 9, 1631, at Aldwinkle in Northamptonshire. The rigorous drill of Busby, and much reading in the Latin and Greek poets at Trinity College, Cambridge, made up his academic education till 1654, when he received his bachelor's degree. His poetic genius was slow in developing, as the notorious verses on the death of Lord Hastings abundantly testify, and it was not till the death of Cromwell in 1658 that he did anything with much promise of eminence in verse. This production was the *Heroic Stanzas,* followed two years later by *Astrea Redux,* which welcomed the restored Charles. Dryden, as Professor Root points out, is not to be charged with mere time-serving, since he but joined in the universal welcome to a king who seemed to assure stability of government when a collapse was threatened by the weak rule of Richard Cromwell. Dryden was throughout in strong sympathy with autocracy.

In 1663 began his active connection with the stage that lasted more or less constantly for thirty-one years and that witnessed the composition of twenty-eight plays. He wrote comedies that pandered all too successfully to the corrupt taste of the Restoration Court, such as *The Wild Gallant* and *The Rival Ladies* (1663), *Marriage à la Mode* (1672), and *The Spanish Friar* (1681); heroic plays, which are the most striking examples of the peculiar product of this age, such as *Tyrannic Love* (1669), *The Conquest of Granada* (1670-2), and *Aurengzebe* (1675); adaptations of foreign plays, such as *Sir Martin Mar-all* (1667) from Molière, and of native plays, such as *The Tempest* with D'Avenant (1667), *All for Love* (1677-8), and *Troilus and Cressida* (1679) from Shakspere; a "tagging" of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in *The State of Innocence* (1674); a dignified tragedy in *Don Sebastian* (1690); and a bitter invective with the purely political purpose of stirring up English wrath against the Dutch in *Amboyna* (1673). After writing his earlier plays in the heroic couplet he discarded in *All for Love* his "long-loved mistress Rhyme" for blank verse. It was a long and arduous service for a man not particularly gifted as a dramatist, but it gave him a mastery of verse and of terse expression, as one can see by comparing his early work in *Annus Mirabilis* (1667) with the splendid satires of the '80's.

In 1670 Dryden attained the height of his popularity when he was appointed historiographer royal and poet laureate, and he expresses his supreme self-

satisfaction in the Epilogue to the Second Part of *The Conquest of Granada.* Punishment quickly followed in the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* (1671), in which he is mercilessly caricatured as the silly, conceited, and immoral "Mr. Bayes" and his heroic plays are made the butt of enduring wit. His political affiliations led to his entering the controversy with Shaftesbury and the Whigs and to his writing the most brilliant poetry of his career, *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), *The Medal* and *Mac Flecknoe* (1682), the last being directed particularly against the unfortunate poet Shadwell for his share in the controversy. Dryden's interest in the cause of law and order, which seemed then most assured by the Anglican Church, occasioned *Religio Laici* (1682), in which he conceived of the Church as a "*via media* between the foreign tyranny of Papistry on the one hand, and the seditious anarchy of the Fanatics on the other" (Root). When James II ascended the throne, Dryden embraced the Roman Catholic faith and championed it in *The Hind and the Panther* (1687). The Church was to him a political institution and he now saw in it the most effective agency for enforcing obedience to government. His purely religious convictions were wholly negligible.

Dryden's prose work consists chiefly of essays in the form of prefaces to his plays and poems, and it covers the entire period of his authorship. Pre-eminent are the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), *An Essay of Heroic Plays* (1672), and *A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire* (1693). Not without justice has he been called the first writer of modern prose.

With the Revolution in 1688 Dryden lost all his offices so that he had to depend upon authorship for his living. He translated *Juvenal* and *Persius* (1693) and *Vergil* (1697); he composed *Alexander's Feast* (1697) and wrote his *Fables* (1700). He died on May 1, 1700, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

"The two parts of *The Conquest of Granada* are written with a seeming determination to glut the public with dramatick wonders; to exhibit in its highest elevation a theatrical meteor of incredible love and impossible valor, and to leave no room for a wilder flight to the extravagance of posterity. All the rays of romantick heat, whether amorous or warlike, glow in Almanzor by a kind of concentration. He is above all laws; he is exempt from all restraints; he ranges the world at will, and governs wherever he appears. He fights without enquiring the cause, and loves in spite of the obligations of justice, of rejection by his mistress, and of prohibition from the dead. Yet the scenes are, for the most part, delightful; they exhibit a kind of illustrious depravity, and majestick madness: such as, if it is sometimes despised, is often reverenced, and in which the ridiculous is mingled with the astonishing."

Dr. Johnson's judgment of *The Conquest of Granada* (1672), thus delivered about a hundred years after the production of the play, does not differ essentially from that of the present. The heroic play was at best a

short-lived species of drama, and the contemporary *Rehearsal* had already in burlesque pretty well taken its measure. The wonder to us at first glance is that such a fantasia of extravagant emotions should ever have been applauded by admiring audiences and been written by such a genius as Dryden. The explanation is to be found partly in social conditions. The patrons of the Restoration theatre were the dwellers in the Court and its purlieus. Charles had come into his own and proceeded to enjoy it. After twenty years of Puritan rule England by royal example was to be merry once more. Naturally, there was a mighty swing of the pendulum from the repression of all worldly pleasures, as shown in the closing of the theatres in 1642, to the uncontrolled license that marked their opening in 1660. The actresses were for the first time regularly established on the English stage, and a vivacious beauty was sure of preferment as a royal or at least a noble mistress. The dialogue of comedy and the prologue and epilogue of tragedy and heroic play carried suggestiveness to a limit unparalleled in our stage history. Yet in so doing they did not surpass the actual conduct of the patrons of the theatres.

Now, as if to form a proper artistic contrast, the heroic drama represented usually, in the rôles of Nell Gwyn and her like, persons of extraordinary virtue successfully undergoing temptations that would corrupt an anchorite. It exalted pure love and marital fidelity to a degree unattempted yet in prose or rime. Sensual love is

> a monster of so frightful mien
> As, to be hated, needs but to be seen.

Lyndaraxa is as abhorrent an instance of selfish infidelity as Almahide is a glorious example of unselfish devotion to duty. Death is as nothing when it comes between the pure love of Ozmyn and Benzayda. Hard-hearted parents relent before the pleadings of innocent affection. Such exalted virtue formed no part of the daily life or experience of those who applauded it on the stage. It has, moreover, a falsetto note which betrays it; the lovers protest too much; devotion unto death is largely a matter of words. It was part of the insincerity of the age that demanded that the protestations of virtuous love should be loud if not deep. An audience that laughs at immorality is the readiest to applaud virtue provided it is sufficiently declamatory.

There was a similar extravagance in sentiment. England put on gay colors on the death of Oliver. Gallantry, the fine flower of courtly life, attains a rank growth while homely love withers. The sprightly cavalier flourished on and off the boards, and he held amorous discourse and correspondence with some matchless Orinda. But there was no real chivalry back of the dainty speeches; it was merely a pretty game to play out of a book in which the participants strove to outdo each other in clever repartee.

Honor is in everyone's mouth but it thrives only on the stage, and there only in the breast of the artificially virtuous heroine. Even Almanzor, the beau ideal of the heroic, naïvely asks, when in a more than questionable situation his honor is appealed to, "What is honor but a love well hid?" Valor is matched only by love in its extravagance. Almanzor, when not checked by the exigencies of Dryden's plot, is literally as terrible as an army with banners. And as if to abate any astonishment which we might feel in the presence of such a hero, Dryden in his dedication of this play to the Duke of York makes clear who his living models were. He says:—

"I have always observed in your Royal Highness an extreme concernment for the honor of your country; 'tis a passion common to you with a brother, the most excellent of kings; and in your two persons are eminent the characters which Homer has given us of heroic virtue: the commanding part in Agamemnon, and the executive in Achilles."

It was a splendidly mendacious tribute to Charles and the Duke!

But this drama was not merely the offspring of the time. It had its origins in the romantic plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, and its later development was affected by the extravagant French romances which were translated into English and imitated. D'Avenant, especially in his *Love and Honour* and *The Siege of Rhodes,* is the link connecting the romantic and the heroic plays. The hero has greatly advanced beyond his romantic prototype and the heroine has attained far more independence of character. The rival has become more important, since he must advance with the hero whose foil he is. The influence of the French romances is chiefly shown in the heightened intensity of the characterization and in certain stock situations. In fact, as Hill remarks, one in "passing directly from the romances to some of Dryden's plays . . . experiences little sense of change: the types of characters are the same, the characters are related in the same way, under similar circumstances they do the same things." So Artaban, "like Almanzor, inspires fear by his terrible eyes; he controls armies with a glance, puts terror into the hearts of his foes, paralyzing them by his mere presence. The first sight the heroine has of him impresses her—as Almahide at her first meeting with Almanzor—with 'a natural fierceness' and with 'the sparkling vivacity of his eyes.'"[1]

"An heroic play," says Dryden in his *Essay of Heroic Plays,* "ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem; and, consequently, . . . love and valor ought to be the subject of it." As in the poem, the action is built around two heroic characters, one a hero unsurpassed in valor, the other his beloved, as constant in virtue as she is in love, and it is carried out in a court harassed by domestic treason, rebellion, and foreign attack. The action proceeds from one great scene to another, so that there is no lack of excitement in the entire course of the five acts. The object of the play is not, as in the Shaksperean tragedy, to work out the fate of a mighty

[1] *La Calprenède's Romances,* pp. 58 and 78.

soul in conflict with great moral forces, but to depict the fortunes of a superhuman hero, who by his amazing valor or the very awe of his name puts down rebellions and overthrows kingdoms in order that he may win his love and that as a consequence virtue may triumph over the forces of evil, his enemies. The motives of action are often violent in keeping with the violent deeds which they occasion; they are unexpected, sometimes arbitrary, but never commonplace. They spring from the complication of love affairs with those of state, and in their variety and startling character they never allow the action to drag. The scene of the play is usually laid in some strange court, as in Jerusalem or Africa or Spanish America, and thus it had for the untravelled Englishman all the charm of a journey into the realm of the imagination. Finally, there was a certain pleasure in the very verse, the heroic couplet, which was admirably adapted to express the exalted sentiments of the heroic character.

It is in the exceeding turmoil of events that the interest of *The Conquest of Granada* chiefly lies. Through the ten acts of its two parts three love plots of divergent claims to attention, laid in a city which is besieged by a foreign foe and distracted by warring factions within its walls, keep one as busy as a spectator at a three-ring circus. Standing out pre-eminently is the love of Almanzor and Almahide. The mighty hero holds in his hands the fortunes of the city and the fates of the Spaniard and the rival factions. His love is the quintessence of the heroic; so far is it above Zulema's that this rival shall "not dare to be so impudent as to despair." In contrast to such love is that of the infatuated Abdelmelech and Abdalla for the designing Lyndaraxa, who plays one lover against another for a crown. Then as striking a more normal balance there is the pure romance of Ozmyn and Benzayda. In addition to the complexities of love there is excitement caused by the recurrently attacking Spaniards and the intermittently revolting Zegrys. It may indeed impress one that the revolts and the siege are timed to suit the exigencies of the love plots; when one of the heroes has to advance his love affair, he goes or is taken over to the Spaniards and thereby sets both love and war in motion. When love is not in need of external excitation, zambras may be danced, songs may be sung, and tournaments and bull fights conducted in ceremonious state without fear of disturbing foes. Then when in Part II mortal agencies fail to keep the stage astir, the ghost of Almanzor's mother dares to reprove her erring son. Very unfilially he threatens to

> Squeeze thee, like a bladder, there
> And make thee groan thyself away to air.
>
> [*The ghost retires.*

In addition to these more important events we have songs and dances, duels, a murder, a suicide, an attempted assault on—of all persons—Almahide, and a trial by combat. No one need complain that the drama lacks action!

In the motivation of his events Dryden rarely fails of startling effects. His interweaving of love affairs with the military operations of the city has very little of the inevitable. One hardly notices that Almahide has a third lover, Zulema, who is mentioned in the early acts. It is seen later that he is used by the dramatist as a mere tool in the manipulation of plot. When Almanzor has aided Abdalla in overthrowing Boabdelin and is therefore in a position to dispose of Almahide, he is checked by his rival Zulema. This check so enrages him that he deserts Abdalla, goes over to Boabdelin, and restores the deposed king to the throne. The counter-turn may not be inevitable, but it furnished lively action.

It is action rather than development of character that we have in this play. Almanzor is as mighty when he kills the bull before the curtain rises as he is when he slays his adversary at the close of the fifth act of the Second Part. And a splendidly imposing personage he must have been to his admiring spectators of the Restoration theatre. It is easy enough for us to pick out inconsistencies which we can glibly say were intended to subserve Dryden's plot. Almanzor can quell riots at a word, turn defeat into victory, and sigh that he has no task worthy of his valor; but when it is necessary to arrest him that the plot may proceed, a few guards are easily equal to the task. Similarly Almahide's repose under distressing circumstances may seem to us ever to be the same, yet this constancy in love must have charmed the cavaliers by its very contrast to their daily experience. She reasons with a calm inflexibility of temper that marks her off from her passionate lover, and she dispenses wisdom and convincing argument in couplets as elegant as her sentiments are fine.

It was these scenes of debate, usually on love, that Scott says were the most applauded in the heroic plays; they would drive a modern audience through the doors. Scenes almost seem to be invented for the sake of the argument they contain. Thus the attempt of Lyndaraxa to win Almanzor is a fine example of argument in verse and not much else. It is a foregone conclusion that no wicked woman can shake the faith of the incomparable lover. Nearly all of Act II is argument, and when Lyndaraxa and one of her lovers appear, they do nothing but debate. Lyndaraxa speaks quite truly when she says:

> "By my own experience I can tell,
> They who love truly cannot argue well."

To argue well is as necessary to an heroic lover as to be valiant is to a soldier. That it was out of place in a play and that it was yet very good verse only show that Dryden was less a dramatic than an argumentative poet.

No form of verse was better adapted to such dialogue than the couplet, as we see it in perfection in the later poems. Dryden was now in the full flush of his enthusiasm over his verse, and he not only used it in the heroic plays but defended it in the critical essays. A serious play, he says, "is

indeed the representation of Nature, but 'tis Nature wrought up to a higher pitch. The plot, the characters, the wit, the passions, the descriptions, are all exalted above the level of common converse, as high as the imagination of the poet can carry them, with proportion to verisimility. . . . Heroic rhyme is nearest Nature, as being the noblest kind of modern verse" (Ker, *Essays,* I, 100-1). And again, "Rhyme . . . has something of the usurper in him; but he is brave and generous, and his dominion pleasing" (ibid. p. 115). Rime bears about the same relation to blank verse that the heroic drama does to the Shaksperean. It is as a pair of stilts on which the characters stalk through the play so that they may have the appearance of heightened dignity. The very artificiality of rime suits very well the exaggerated pose of the characters. It is essentially declamatory in Dryden's hands and at times rises to poetic heights. The heroic play would lose in complete consistency were it not written in the couplet form, and it is significant that when Dryden tired of his long-loved mistress rime, he ceased to write heroic plays.

Dryden was not a great dramatic poet, but he wrote the best heroic drama of his time. His stage is nearly always crowded with action, his characters possess the extravagant traits that would thrill a jaded audience, and his verse is rarely without dignity. When events were not following one another rapidly, his audiences were entertained by the thrust and parry of argumentative discourse on the all-important matters of love and honor, so that boredom was impossible to them. To us the heroic play may not remain, as Johnson says, "for the most part delightful," yet it does "exhibit a kind of illustrious depravity, and majestic madness: such as, if it is somewhat despised, is often reverenced, and in which the ridiculous is mingled with the astonishing."

THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA

PART I

Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo;
Majus opus moveo. VIRGIL, *Æneid*, vii, 44, 45.

PROLOGUE TO PART I

Spoken by Mrs. Ellen Gwyn, in a Broad-brimmed Hat, and Waist-belt.

This jest was first of t'other house's making,
And five times tried, has never failed of taking;
For 'twere a shame a poet should be killed
Under the shelter of so broad a shield.
This is that hat, whose very sight did win ye
To laugh and clap as though the devil were in ye.
As then, for Nokes, so now I hope you'll be
So dull, to laugh once more for love of me.
"I'll write a play," says one, "for I have got
A broad-brimmed hat, and waist-belt, towards a plot."
Says t'other, "I have one more large than that."
Thus they out-write each other with a hat!
The brims still grew with every play they writ;
And grew so large, they covered all the wit.
Hat was the play; 'twas language, wit, and tale:
Like them that find meat, drink, and cloth in ale.
What dulness do these mongrel wits confess,
When all their hope is acting of a dress!
Thus, two the best comedians of the age
Must be worn out, with being blocks o' the stage;
Like a young girl, who better things has known,
Beneath their poet's impotence they groan.
See now what charity it was to save!
They thought you liked, what only you forgave;
And brought you more dull sense, dull sense much worse
Than brisk gay nonsense, and the heavier curse.
They bring old iron, and glass upon the stage,
To barter with the Indians of our age.
Still they write on, and like great authors show;
But 'tis as rollers in wet gardens grow
Heavy with dirt, and gathering as they go.

May none, who have so little understood,
To like such trash, presume to praise what's good!
And may those drudges of the stage, whose fate
Is damned dull farce more dully to translate,
Fall under that excise the state thinks fit
To set on all French wares, whose worst is wit.
French farce, worn out at home, is sent abroad;
And, patched up here, is made our English mode.
Henceforth, let poets ere allowed to write,
Be searched, like duellists before they fight,
For wheel-broad hats, dull humor, all that chaff,
Which makes you mourn, and makes the vulgar laugh:
For these, in plays, are as unlawful arms,
As, in a combat, coats of mail, and charms.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Mahomet Boabdelin, *the last King of Granada.*
Prince Abdalla, *his brother.*
Abdelmelech, *chief of the Abencerrages.*
Zulema, *chief of the Zegrys.*
Abenamar, *an old Abencerrago.*
Selin, *an old Zegry.*
Ozmyn, *a brave young Abencerrago, son to Abenamar.*
Hamet, *brother to Zulema, a Zegry.*
Gomel, *a Zegry.*
Almanzor.
Ferdinand, *King of Spain.*
Duke of Arcos, *his General.*
Don Alonzo d'Aguilar, *a Spanish Captain.*

Almahide, *Queen of Granada.*
Lyndaraxa, *sister of* Zulema, *a Zegry lady.*
Benzayda, *daughter to* Selin.
Esperanza, *slave to the Queen.*
Halyma, *slave to* Lyndaraxa.
Isabella, *Queen of Spain.*

Messengers, Guards, Attendants, Men, and Women.

Scene.—Granada, and the Christian Camp besieging it.

ACT I

Scene I

Boabdelin, Abenamar, Abdelmelech, *Guards.*

Boab. **Thus, in the triumphs of soft peace, I reign;**
And, from my walls, defy the powers of Spain;
With pomp and sports my love I celebrate,
While they keep distance, and attend my state.— [*To* Aben.
Parent to her, whose eyes my soul enthral,
Whom I, in hope, already father call,
Abenamar, thy youth these sports has known,
Of which thy age is now spectator grown;
Judge-like thou sit'st, to praise, or to arraign
The flying skirmish of the darted cane:
But, when fierce bulls run loose upon the place,
And our bold Moors their loves with danger grace,
Then heat new-bends thy slackened nerves again,
And a short youth runs warm through every vein.
Aben. **I must confess the encounters of this day**
Warmed me indeed, but quite another way:
Not with the fire of youth; but generous rage,
To see the glories of my youthful age
So far out-done.
Abdelm. **Castile could never boast, in all its pride,**
A pomp so splendid, when the lists, set wide,
Gave room to the fierce bulls, which wildly ran
In Sierra Ronda, ere the war began;
Who, with high nostrils snuffing up the wind,

Now stood the champions of the savage kind.
Just opposite, within the circled place,
Ten of our bold Abencerrages' race
(Each brandishing his bull-spear in his hand)
Did their proud jennets gracefully command.
On their steeled heads their demi-lances wore
Small pennons, which their ladies' colors bore.
Before this troop did warlike Ozmyn go;
Each lady, as he rode, saluting low;
At the chief stands, with reverence more profound,
His well-taught courser, kneeling, touched the ground;
Thence raised, he sidelong bore his rider on,
Still facing, till he out of sight was gone.

Boab. You praise him like a friend; and I confess,
His brave deportment merited no less.

Abdelm. Nine bulls were launched by his victorious arm,
Whose wary jennet, shunning still the harm,
Seemed to attend the shock, and then leaped wide:
Meanwhile, his dexterous rider, when he spied
The beast just stooping, 'twixt the neck and head
His lance, with never-erring fury, sped.

Aben. My son did well, and so did Hamet too;
Yet did no more than we were wont to do;
But what the stranger did was more than man.

Abdelm. He finished all those triumphs we began.
One bull, with curled black head, beyond the rest,
And dew-laps hanging from his brawny chest,
With nodding front a while did daring stand,
And with his jetty hoof spurned back the sand;
Then, leaping forth, he bellowed out aloud:
The amazed assistants back each other crowd,
While monarch-like he ranged the listed field;
Some tossed, some gored, some trampling down he killed.
The ignobler Moors from far his rage provoke
With woods of darts, which from his sides he shook.
Meantime your valiant son, who had before
Gained fame, rode round to every mirador;
Beneath each lady's stand a stop he made,
And, bowing, took the applauses which they paid,
Just in that point of time, the brave unknown
Approached the lists.

Boab. I marked him, when alone
(Observed by all, himself observing none)
He entered first, and with a graceful pride
His fiery Arab dexterously did guide,
Who while his rider every stand surveyed,
Sprung loose, and flew into an escapade;
Not moving forward, yet, with every bound,
Pressing, and seeming still to quit his ground.
What after passed
Was far from the ventanna where I sate,
But you were near, and can the truth relate.
[*To* Abdelm.

Abdelm. Thus while he stood, the bull, who saw his foe,
His easier conquests proudly did forego;
And, making at him with a furious bound,
From his bent forehead aimed a double wound.
A rising murmur ran through all the field,
And every lady's blood with fear was chilled:
Some shrieked, while others, with more helpful care,
Cried out aloud, "Beware, brave youth, beware!"
At this he turned, and, as the bull drew near,
Shunned and received him on his pointed spear:
The lance broke short, the beast then bellowed loud
And his strong neck to a new onset bowed.
The undaunted youth
Then drew! and from his saddle bending low
Just where the neck did to the shoulders grow,
With his full force discharged a deadly blow
Not heads of poppies (when they reap the grain)
Fall with more ease before the laboring swain,
Than fell this head:
It fell so quick, it did even death prevent,
And made imperfect bellowings as it went
Then all the trumpets victory did sound,
And yet their clangors in our shouts were drown'd. [*A confused noise within.*

Boab. The alarm-bell rings from our Alhambra walls,
And from the streets sound drums and atabals.
[*Within, a bell, drums, and trumpets.*

To them a Messenger.

How now? from whence proceed these new alarms?

Mess. The two fierce factions are again in arms;
And, changing into blood the day's delight,
The Zegrys with the Abencerrages fight;
On each side their allies and friends appear
The Macas here, the Alabezes there:
The Gazuls with the Bencerrages join,
And, with the Zegrys, all great Gomel's line

Boab. Draw up behind the Vivarambla place;
Double my guards,—these factions I will face;
And try if all the fury they can bring,
Be proof against the presence of their king.
[*Exit* Boab.

The Factions appear: At the head of the Abencerrages, Ozmyn; *at the head of the Zegrys,* Zulema, Hamet, Gomel, *and* Selin: Abenamar *and* Abdelmelech *joined with the Abencerrages.*

Zul. The faint Abencerrages quit their ground;
Press 'em; put home your thrusts to every wound.
Abdelm. Zegry, on manly force our line relies;
Thine poorly takes the advantage of surprise:
Unarmed and much out-numbered we retreat;
You gain no fame, when basely you defeat.
If thou art brave, seek nobler victory;
Save Moorish blood; and, while our bands stand by,
Let two to two an equal combat try.
Ham. 'Tis not for fear the combat we refuse,
But we our gained advantage will not lose.
Zul. In combating, but two of you will fall;
And we resolve we will despatch you all.
Ozm. We'll double yet the exchange before we die,
And each of ours two lives of yours shall buy.

Almanzor *enters betwixt them, as they stand ready to engage.*

Almanz. I cannot stay to ask which cause is best;
But this is so to me, because opprest.
[*Goes to the Abencerrages.*

To them Boabdelin *and his Guards, going betwixt them.*

Boab. On your allegiance, I command you stay;
Who passes here, through me must make his way;
My life's the Isthmus; through this narrow line
You first must cut, before those seas can join.
What fury, Zegrys, has possessed your minds?
What rage the brave Abencerrages blinds?
If of your courage you new proofs would show,
Without much travel you may find a foe.
These foes are neither so remote nor few,
That you should need each other to pursue.
Lean times and foreign wars should minds unite;
When poor, men mutter, but they seldom fight.
O holy Allah! that I live to see
Thy Granadines assist their enemy!
You fight the Christians' battles; every life
You lavish thus, in this intestine strife,
Does from our weak foundations take one prop
Which helped to hold our sinking country up.
Ozm. 'Tis fit our private enmity should cease;
Though injured first, yet I will first seek peace.
Zul. No, murderer, no; I never will be won
To peace with him, whose hand has slain my son.
Ozm. Our prophet's curse
On me, and all the Abencerrages light,
If, unprovoked, I with your son did fight.
Abdelm. A band of Zegrys ran within the place,
Matched with a troop of thirty of our race.
Your son and Ozmyn the first squadrons led,
Which, ten by ten, like Parthians, charged and fled,
The ground was strowed with canes where we did meet,
Which crackled underneath our coursers' feet:
When Tarifa (I saw him ride apart)
Changed his blunt cane for a steel-pointed dart,
And, meeting Ozmyn next,—
Who wanted time for treason to provide,—
He basely threw it at him, undefied.
Ozm. [*showing his arms*]. Witness this blood—which when by treason sought,
That followed, sir, which to myself I ought.
Zul. His hate to thee was grounded on a grudge,
Which all our generous Zegrys just did judge:
Thy villain-blood thou openly didst place
Above the purple of our kingly race.
Boab. From equal stems their blood both houses draw,
They from Morocco, you from Cordova.
Ham. Their mongrel race is mixed with Christian breed;
Hence 'tis that they those dogs in prisons feed.
Abdelm. Our holy prophet wills, that charity
Should even to birds and beasts extended be:
None knows what fate is for himself designed;
The thought of human chance should make us kind.
Gom. We waste that time we to revenge should give:
Fall on: let no Abencerrago live.
[*Advancing before the rest of his party.*

Almanzor, *advancing on the other side, and describing a line with his sword.*

Almanz. **Upon thy life pass not this middle space;**
Sure death stands guarding the forbidden place.
Gom. **To dare that death, I will approach yet nigher**
Thus,—wert thou compassed in with circling fire. [*They fight.*
Boab. **Disarm 'em both; if they resist you, kill.**

Almanzor, *in the midst of the Guards, kills* Gomel, *and then is disarmed.*

Almanz. **Now you have but the leavings of my will.**
Boab. **Kill him! this insolent unknown shall fall,**
And be the victim to atone you all.
Ozm. **If he must die, not one of us will live:**
That life he gave for us, for him we give.
Boab. **It was a traitor's voice that spoke those words;**
So are you all, who do not sheathe your swords.
Zul. **Outrage unpunished, when a prince is by,**
Forfeits to scorn the rights of majesty:
No subject his protection can expect,
Who what he owes himself does first neglect.
Aben. **This stranger, sir, is he,**
Who lately in the Vivarambla place
Did, with so loud applause, your triumphs grace.
Boab. **The word which I have given, I'll not revoke;**
If he be brave, he's ready for the stroke.
Almanz. **No man has more contempt than I of breath,**
But whence hast thou the right to give me death?
Obeyed as sovereign by thy subjects be,
But know, that I alone am king of me.
I am as free as nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.
Boab. **Since, then, no power above your own you know,**
Mankind should use you like a common foe;
You should be hunted like a beast of prey:
By your own law I take your life away.
Almanz. **My laws are made but only for my sake;**
No king against himself a law can make.
If thou pretend'st to be a prince like me,
Blame not an act, which should thy pattern be.
I saw the oppressed, and thought it did belong
To a king's office to redress the wrong:
I brought that succor, which thou ought'st to bring,
And so, in nature, am thy subjects' king.
Boab. **I do not want your counsel to direct,**
Or aid to help me punish or protect.
Almanz. **Thou want'st 'em both, or better thou wouldst know,**
Than to let factions in thy kingdom grow.
Divided interests, while thou think'st to sway,
Draw, like two brooks, thy middle stream away:
For though they band and jar, yet both combine
To make their greatness by the fall of thine.
Thus, like a buckler, thou art held in sight,
While they behind thee with each other fight.
Boab. **Away, and execute him instantly!** [*To his Guards.*
Almanz. **Stand off; I have not leisure yet to die.**

To them Abdalla, *hastily.*

Abdal. **Hold, sir! for heaven sake hold!**
Defer this noble stranger's punishment,
Or your rash orders you will soon repent.
Boab. **Brother, you know not yet his insolence.**
Abdal. **Upon yourself you punish his offence:**
If we treat gallant strangers in this sort,
Mankind will shun the inhospitable court;
And who, henceforth, to our defence will come,
If death must be the brave Almanzor's doom?
From Africa I drew him to your aid,
And for his succor have his life betrayed.
Boab. **Is this the Almanzor whom at Fez you knew,**
When first their swords the Xeriff brothers drew?
Abdal. **This, sir, is he, who for the elder fought,**
And to the juster cause the conquest brought;
Till the proud Santo, seated in the throne,
Disdained the service he had done to own:
Then to the vanquished part his fate he led:
The vanquished triumphed, and the victor fled.
Vast is his courage, boundless is his mind,
Rough as a storm, and humorous as wind:
Honor's the only idol of his eyes;
The charms of beauty like a pest he flies;
And, raised by valor from a birth unknown,
Acknowledges no power above his own.
[Boabdelin *coming to* Almanzor.
Boab. **Impute your danger to our ignorance:**
The bravest men are subject most to chance:
Granada much does to your kindness owe;
But towns, expecting sieges, cannot show

More honor, than to invite you to a foe.
Almanz. I do not doubt but I have been to blame:
But, to pursue the end for which I came,
Unite your subjects first; then let us go,
And pour their common rage upon the foe.
Boab. [*to the Factions*]. Lay down your arms, and let me beg you cease
Your enmities.
Zul. We will not hear of peace,
Till we by force have first revenged our slain.
Abdelm. The action we have done we will maintain.
Selin. Then let the king depart, and we will try
Our cause by arms.
Zul. For us and victory!
Boab. A king entreats you.
Almanz. What subjects will precarious kings regard?
A beggar speaks too softly to be heard:
Lay down your arms! 'tis I command you now.
Do it—or, by our prophet's soul I vow,
My hands shall right your king on him I seize.
Now let me see whose look but disobeys.
All. Long live king Mahomet Boabdelin!
Almanz. No more; but hushed as midnight silence go:
He will not have your acclamations now.
Hence, you unthinking crowd!—
[*The common people go off on both parties.*
Empire, thou poor and despicable thing,
When such as these unmake or make a king!
Abdal. How much of virtue lies in one great soul, [*Embracing him.*
Whose single force can multitudes control!
[*A trumpet within.*

Enter a Messenger.

Messen. The Duke of Arcos, sir,
Does with a trumpet from the foe appear.
Boab. Attend him; he shall have his audience here.

Enter the Duke of Arcos.

D. Arcos. The monarchs of Castile and Aragon
Have sent me to you, to demand this town,
To which their just and rightful claim is known.
Boab. Tell Ferdinand, my right to it appears
By long possession of eight hundred years:
When first my ancestors from Afric sailed,
In Rodrique's death your Gothic title failed.
D. Arcos. The successors of Rodrique still remain,
And ever since have held some part of Spain:
Even in the midst of your victorious powers,
The Asturias, and all Portugal, were ours.
You have no right, except you force allow;
And if yours then was just, so ours is now.
Boab. 'Tis true from force the noblest title springs;
I therefore hold from that, which first made kings.
D. Arcos. Since then by force you prove your title true,
Ours must be just, because we claim from you.
When with your father you did jointly reign,
Invading with your Moors the south of Spain,
I, who that day the Christians did command,
Then took, and brought you bound to Ferdinand.
Boab. I'll hear no more; defer what you would say:
In private we'll discourse some other day.
D. Arcos. Sir, you shall hear, however you are loth,
That, like a perjured prince, you broke your oath:
To gain your freedom you a contract signed,
By which your crown you to my king resigned,
From thenceforth as his vassal holding it,
And paying tribute such as he thought fit;
Contracting, when your father came to die,
To lay aside all marks of royalty,
And at Purchena privately to live,
Which, in exchange, king Ferdinand did give.
Boab. The force used on me made that contract void.
D. Arcos. Why have you then its benefits enjoyed?
By it you had not only freedom then,
But, since, had aid of money and of men;
And, when Granada for your uncle held,
You were by us restored, and he expelled.
Since that, in peace we let you reap your grain,
Recalled our troops, that used to beat your plain;
And more——
Almanz. Yes, yes, you did with wondrous care,
Against his rebels prosecute the war,
While he secure in your protection slept;
For him you took, but for yourselves you kept.
Thus, as some fawning usurer does feed,
With present sums, the unwary unthrift's need,
You sold your kindness at a boundless rate,
And then o'erpaid the debt from his estate;
Which, mouldering piecemeal, in your hands did fall
Till now at last you came to swoop it all.
D. Arcos. The wrong you do my king I cannot bear;
Whose kindness you would odiously compare.
The estate was his; which yet, since you deny,

He's now content, in his own wrong, to buy.
Almanz. And he shall buy it dear what his he calls—
We will not give one stone from out these walls.
Boab. Take this for answer, then,—
Whate'er your arms have conquered of my land,
I will, for peace, resign to Ferdinand.
To harder terms my mind I cannot bring;
But, as I still have lived, will die a king.
D. Arcos. Since thus you have resolved, henceforth prepare
For all the last extremities of war:
My king his hope from heaven's assistance draws.
Almanz. The Moors have heaven, and me, to assist their cause. [*Exit* ARCOS.

Enter ESPERANZA.

Esper. Fair Almahide,
(Who did with weeping eyes these discords see,
And fears the omen may unlucky be,)
Prepares a zambra to be danced this night,
In hope soft pleasures may your minds unite.
Boab. My mistress gently chides the fault I made:
But tedious business has my love delayed,—
Business, which dares the joys of kings invade.
Almanz. First let us sally out, and meet the foe.
Abdal. Led on by you, we on to triumph go.
Boab. Then with the day let war and tumult cease;
The night be sacred to our love and peace:
'Tis just some joys on weary kings should wait;
'Tis all we gain by being slaves of state.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I

ABDALLA, ABDELMELECH, OZMYN, ZULEMA, *and* HAMET, *as returning from the sally.*

Abdal. This happy day does to Granada bring
A lasting peace, and triumphs to the king:
The two fierce factions will no longer jar,
Since they have now been brothers in the war.
Those who, apart, in emulation fought,
The common danger to one body brought;
And, to his cost, the proud Castilian finds
Our Moorish courage in united minds.
Abdelm. Since to each other's aid our lives we owe,
Lose we the name of faction, and of foe;
Which I to Zulema can bear no more,
Since Lyndaraxa's beauty I adore.
Zul. I am obliged to Lyndaraxa's charms,
Which gain the conquest I should lose by arms;
And wish my sister may continue fair,
That I may keep a good,
Of whose possession I should else despair.
Ozm. While we indulge our common happiness,
He is forgot, by whom we all possess;
The brave Almanzor, to whose arms we owe
All that we did, and all that we shall do;
Who, like a tempest, that outrides the wind,
Made a just battle ere the bodies joined.
Abdelm. His victories we scarce could keep in view,
Or polish 'em so fast as he rough-drew.
Abdal. Fate, after him, below with pain did move,
And victory could scarce keep pace above:
Death did at length so many slain forget,
And lost the tale, and took 'em by the great.

To them ALMANZOR *with the* DUKE OF ARCOS, *prisoner.*

Hamet. See, here he comes,
And leads in triumph him who did command
The vanquished army of king Ferdinand.
Almanz. [*to the* DUKE OF ARCOS]. Thus far your master's arms a fortune find
Below the swelled ambition of his mind;
And Allah shuts a misbeliever's reign
From out the best and goodliest part of Spain.
Let Ferdinand Calabrian conquests make,
And from the French contested Milan take;
Let him new worlds discover to the old,
And break up shining mountains, big with gold;
Yet he shall find this small domestic foe,
Still sharp and pointed, to his bosom grow.
D. Arcos. Of small advantages too much you boast;
You beat the out-guards of my master's host:
This little loss, in our vast body, shows
So small, that half have never heard the news.
Fame's out of breath, ere she can fly so far,
To tell 'em all that you have e'er made war.
Almanz. It pleases me your army is so great;
For now I know there's more to conquer yet.
By heaven, I'll see what troops you have behind:
I'll face this storm, that thickens in the wind;
And, with bent forehead, full against it go,
Till I have found the last and utmost foe.
D. Arcos. Believe, you shall not long attend in vain:
To-morrow's dawn shall cover all your plain;
Bright arms shall flash upon you from afar,
A wood of lances, and a moving war.
But I, unhappy, in my bands, must yet
Be only pleased to hear of your defeat,

And with a slave's inglorious ease remain,
Till conquering Ferdinand has broke my chain.
Almanz. Vain man, thy hopes of Ferdinand are weak!
I hold thy chain too fast for him to break.
But, since thou threaten'st us, I'll set thee free,
That I again may fight, and conquer thee.
D. Arcos. Old as I am, I take thee at thy word,
And will to-morrow thank thee with my sword.
Almanz. I'll go, and instantly acquaint the king,
And sudden orders for thy freedom bring;
Thou canst not be so pleased at liberty
As I shall be to find thou dar'st be free.
[*Exeunt* Almanzor, Arcos, *and the rest, excepting only* Abdalla *and* Zulema.
Abdal. Of all those Christians who infest this town,
This Duke of Arcos is of most renown.
Zul. Oft have I heard, that in your father's reign,
His bold adventurers beat the neighboring plain;
Then under Ponce Leon's name he fought,
And from our triumphs many prizes brought;
Till in disgrace from Spain at length he went,
And since continued long in banishment.
Abdal. But see, your beauteous sister does appear.

To them Lyndaraxa.

Zul. By my desire she came to find me here.
[Zulema *and* Lyndaraxa *whisper; then* Zulema *goes out, and* Lyndaraxa *is going after.*
Abdal. Why, fairest Lyndaraxa, do you fly [*Staying her.*
A prince, who at your feet is proud to die?
Lyndar. Sir, I should blush to own so rude a thing, [*Staying.*
As 'tis to shun the brother of my king.
Abdal. In my hard fortune I some ease should find,
Did your disdain extend to all mankind.
But give me leave to grieve, and to complain,
That you give others what I beg in vain.
Lyndar. Take my esteem, if you on that can live;
For, frankly, sir, 'tis all I have to give:
If from my heart you ask or hope for more,
I grieve the place is taken up before.
Abdal. My rival merits you.—
To Abdelmelech I will justice do;
For he wants worth, who dares not praise a foe.
Lyndar. That for his virtue, sir, you make defence,
Shows in your own a noble confidence.
But him defending, and excusing me,
I know not what can your advantage be.
Abdal. I fain would ask, ere I proceed in this,
If, as by choice, you are by promise his?
Lyndar. The engagement only in my love does lie,
But that's a knot which you can ne'er untie.
Abdal. When cities are besieged, and treat to yield,
If there appear relievers from the field,
The flag of parley may be taken down,
Till the success of those without be known.
Lyndar. Though Abdelmelech has not yet possest,
Yet I have sealed the treaty for my breast.
Abdal. Your treaty has not tied you to a day;
Some chance might break it, would you but delay.
If I can judge the secrets of your heart,
Ambition in it has the greatest part;
And wisdom, then, will show some difference
Betwixt a private person and a prince.
Lyndar. Princes are subjects still,—
Subject and subject can small difference bring:
The difference is 'twixt subjects and a king.
And since, sir, you are none, your hopes remove;
For less than empire I'll not change my love.
Abdal. Had I a crown, all I should prize in it,
Should be the power to lay it at your feet.
Lyndar. Had you that crown which you but wish, not hope,
Then I, perhaps, might stoop and take it up.
But till your wishes and your hopes agree,
You shall be still a private man with me.
Abdal. If I am king, and if my brother die,—
Lyndar. Two if's scarce make one possibility.
Abdal. The rule of happiness by reason scan;
You may be happy with a private man.
Lyndar. That happiness I may enjoy, 'tis true;
But then that private man must not be you.
Where'er I love, I'm happy in my choice;
If I make you so, you shall pay my price.
Abdal. Why would you be so great?
Lyndar. Because I've seen,
This day, what 'tis to hope to be a queen.
Heaven, how you all watched each motion of her eye!
None could be seen while Almahide was by,
Because she is to be Her Majesty!—
Why would I be a queen? Because my face
Would wear the title with a better grace.
If I became it not, yet it would be
Part of your duty, then, to flatter me.
These are not half the charms of being great;
I would be somewhat—that I know not yet:
Yes! I avow the ambition of my soul,

To be that one, to live without control!
And that's another happiness to me,
To be so happy as but one can be.
Abdal. Madam, — because I would all doubts remove,—
Would you, were I a king, accept my love?
Lyndar. I would accept it; and, to show 'tis true,
From any other man as soon as you.
Abdal. Your sharp replies make me not love you less;
But make me seek new paths to happiness.
What I design, by time will best be seen:
You may be mine, and yet may be a queen.
When you are so, your word your love assures.
Lyndar. Perhaps not love you,—but I will be yours.—
[*He offers to take her hand, and kiss it.*
Stay, sir, that grace I cannot yet allow,
Before you set the crown upon my brow.—
That favor which you seek,
Or Abdelmelech, or a king, must have;
When you are so, then you may be my slave.
[*Exit; but looks smiling back on him.*
Abdal. Howe'er imperious in her words she were,
Her parting looks had nothing of severe;
A glancing smile allured me to command,
And her soft fingers gently pressed my hand:
I felt the pleasure glide through every part;
Her hand went through me to my very heart.
For such another pleasure, did he live,
I could my father of a crown deprive.
What did I say?—
Father!—That impious thought has shocked my mind:
How bold our passions are, and yet how blind!—
She's gone; and now,
Methinks there is less glory in a crown:
My boiling passions settle, and go down.
Like amber chafed, when she is near, she acts;
When farther off, inclines, but not attracts.

To him Zulema.

Assist me, Zulema, if thou wouldst be
That friend thou seem'st, assist me against me.
Betwixt my love and virtue I am tossed;
This must be forfeited, or that be lost.
I could do much to merit thy applause;
Help me to fortify the better cause.
My honor is not wholly put to flight,
But would, if seconded, renew the fight.
Zul. I met my sister, but I do not see
What difficulty in your choice can be:
She told me all; and 'tis so plain a case,
You need not ask what counsel to embrace.
Abdal. I stand reproved, that I did doubt at all;
My waiting virtue stayed but for thy call:
'Tis plain that she, who, for a kingdom, now
Would sacrifice her love, and break her vow,
Not out of love, but interest, acts alone,
And would, even in my arms, lie thinking of a throne.
Zul. Add to the rest this one reflection more:
When she is married, and you still adore,
Think then—and think what comfort it will bring—
She had been mine,
Had I but only dared to be a king!
Abdal. I hope you only would my honor try;
I'm loth to think you virtue's enemy.
Zul. If, when a crown and mistress are in place,
Virtue intrudes, with her lean holy face,
Virtue's then mine, and not I virtue's foe.
Why does she come where she has nought to do?
Let her with anchorites, not with lovers, lie;
Statesmen and they keep better company.
Abdal. Reason was given to curb our headstrong will.
Zul. Reason but shows a weak physician's skill;
Gives nothing, while the raging fit does last,
But stays to cure it, when the worst is past.
Reason's a staff for age, when nature's gone;
But youth is strong enough to walk alone.
Abdal. In cursed ambition I no rest should find,
But must for ever lose my peace of mind.
Zul. Methinks that peace of mind were bravely lost.
A crown, whate'er we give, is worth the cost.
Abdal. Justice distributes to each man his right;
But what she gives not, should I take by might?
Zul. If justice will take all, and nothing give,
Justice, methinks, is not distributive.
Abdal. Had fate so pleased, I had been eldest born,
And then, without a crime, the crown had worn.
Zul. Would you so please, fate yet a way would find;
Man makes his fate according to his mind.
The weak low spirit fortune makes her slave;
But she's a drudge when hectored by the brave:
If fate weaves common thread, he'll change the doom,
And with new purple spread a nobler loom.
Abdal. No more!—I will usurp the royal seat;
Thou, who hast made me wicked, make me great.
Zul. Your way is plain: the death of Tarifa
Does on the king our Zegrys' hatred draw;

Though with our enemies in show we close,
'Tis but while we to purpose can be foes.
Selin, who heads us, would revenge his son;
But favor hinders justice to be done.
Proud Ozmyn with the king his power maintains,
And in him each Abencerrago reigns.
Abdal. What face of any title can I bring?
Zul. The right an eldest son has to be king.
Your father was at first a private man,
And got your brother ere his reign began:
When, by his valor, he the crown had won,
Then you were born, a monarch's eldest son.
Abdal. To sharp-eyed reason this would seem untrue;
But reason I through love's false optics view.
Zul. Love's mighty power has led me captive too;
I am in it unfortunate as you.
Abdal. Our loves and fortunes shall together go;
Thou shalt be happy, when I first am so.
Zul. The Zegrys at old Selin's house are met,
Where, in close council, for revenge they sit:
There we our common interest will unite;
You their revenge shall own, and they your right.
One thing I had forgot which may import:
I met Almanzor coming back from court,
But with a discomposed and speedy pace,
A fiery color kindling all his face:
The king his prisoner's freedom has denied,
And that refusal has provoked his pride.
Abdal. Would he were ours!—
I'll try to gild the injustice of his cause,
And court his valor with a vast applause.
Zul. The bold are but the instruments o' the wise;
They undertake the dangers we advise:
And, while our fabric with their pains we raise,
We take the profit, and pay them with praise.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

Scene I

Almanzor *and* Abdalla.

Almanz. That he should dare to do me this disgrace!—
Is fool or coward writ upon my face?
Refuse my prisoner!—I such means will use,
He shall not have a prisoner to refuse.
Abdal. He said you were not by your promise tied;
That he absolved your word, when he denied.
Almanz. He break my promise and absolve my vow!
'Tis more than Mahomet himself can do!
The word which I have given shall stand like fate;
Not like the king's, that weathercock of state.
He stands so high, with so unfixed a mind,
Two factions turn him with each blast of wind:
But now, he shall not veer! My word is passed;
I'll take his heart by the roots, and hold it fast.
Abdal. You have your vengeance in your hand this hour;
Make me the humble creature of your power:
The Granadines will gladly me obey
Tired with so base and impotent a sway;
And, when I show my title, you shall see
I have a better right to reign than he.
Almanz. It is sufficient that you make the claim;
You wrong our friendship when your right you name.
When for myself I fight, I weigh the cause,
But friendship will admit of no such laws:
That weighs by the lump; and, when the cause is light,
Puts kindness in to set the balance right.
True, I would wish my friend the juster side;
But, in the unjust, my kindness more is tried:
And all the opposition I can bring,
Is that I fear to make you such a king.
Abdal. The majesty of kings we should not blame,
When royal minds adorn the royal name;
The vulgar, greatness too much idolize,
But haughty subjects it too much despise.
Almanz. I only speak of him,
Whom pomp and greatness sit so loose about,
That he wants majesty to fill 'em out.
Abdal. Haste, then, and lose no time!—
The business must be enterprised this night:
We must surprise the court in its delight.
Almanz. For you to will, for me 'tis to obey:
But I would give a crown in open day;
And, when the Spaniards their assault begin,
At once beat those without, and these within.
[*Exit* Almanz.

Enter Abdelmelech.

Abdelm. Abdalla, hold!—There's somewhat I intend
To speak, not as your rival, but your friend.
Abdal. If as a friend, I am obliged to hear;
And what a rival says I cannot fear.
Abdelm. Think, brave Abdalla, what it is you do:
Your quiet, honor, and our friendship too,
All for a fickle beauty you forego.
Think, and turn back, before it be too late.
Behold in me the example of your fate:
I am your sea-mark; and, though wrecked and lost,

My ruins stand to warn you from the coast.
Abdal. Your counsels, noble Abdelmelech, move
My reason to accept 'em, not my love.
Ah, why did heaven leave man so weak defence,
To trust frail reason with the rule of sense!
'Tis overpoised and kicked up in the air,
While sense weighs down the scale, and keeps it there;
Or, like a captive king, 'tis borne away,
And forced to countenance its own rebel's sway.
Abdelm. No, no; our reason was not vainly lent;
Nor is a slave, but by its own consent:
If reason on his subject's triumph wait,
An easy king deserves no better fate.
Abdal. You speak too late; my empire's lost too far:
I cannot fight.
Abdelm. Then make a flying war;
Dislodge betimes before you are beset.
Abdal. Her tears, her smiles, her every look's a net.
Her voice is like a Siren's of the land;
And bloody hearts lie panting in her hand.
Abdelm. This do you know, and tempt the danger still?
Abdal. Love, like a lethargy, has seized my will.
I'm not myself, since from her sight I went;
I lean my trunk that way, and there stand bent.
As one who, in some frightful dream, would shun
His pressing foe, labors in vain to run;
And his own slowness in his sleep bemoans,
With thick short sighs, weak cries, and tender groans,
So I——
Abdelm. Some friend, in charity, should shake,
And rouse, and call you loudly till you wake.
Too well I know her blandishments to gain,
Usurper-like, till settled in her reign;
Then proudly she insults, and gives you cares
And jealousies, short hopes and long despairs.
To this hard yoke you must hereafter bow,
Howe'er she shines all golden to you now.
Abdal. Like him, who on the ice
Slides swiftly on, and sees the water near,
Yet cannot stop himself in his career,
So am I carried. This enchanted place,
Like Circe's isle, is peopled with a race
Of dogs and swine; yet, though their fate I know,
I look with pleasure, and am turning too.
[Lyndaraxa *passes over the stage.*
Abdelm. Fly, fly, before the allurements of her face,
Ere she return with some resistless grace,
And with new magic covers all the place.
Abdal. I cannot, will not,—nay, I would not fly:
I'll love, be blind, be cozened till I die;
And you, who bid me wiser counsel take,
I'll hate, and, if I can, I'll kill you for her sake.
Abdelm. Even I, that counselled you, that choice approve:
I'll hate you blindly, and her blindly love.
Prudence, that stemmed the stream, is out of breath;
And to go down it is the easier death.

Lyndaraxa *re-enters, and smiles on* Abdalla.

[*Exit* Abdalla.
Abdelm. That smile on Prince Abdalla seems to say,
You are not in your killing mood to-day:
Men brand, indeed, your sex with cruelty,
But you're too good to see poor lovers die.
This godlike pity in you I extol;
And more, because, like heaven's, 'tis general.
Lyndar. My smile implies not that I grant his suit:
'Twas but a bare return of his salute.
Abdelm. It said, you were engaged, and I in place;
But, to please both, you would divide the grace.
Lyndar. You've cause to be contented with your part,
When he has but the look, and you the heart.
Abdelm. In giving but that look, you give what's mine:
I'll not one corner of a glance resign.
All's mine; and I am covetous of my store:
I have not love enough; I'll tax you more.
Lyndar. I gave not love; 'twas but civility:
He is a prince; that's due to his degree.
Abdelm. That prince you smiled on is my rival still,
And should, if me you loved, be treated ill.
Lyndar. I know not how to show so rude a spite.
Abdelm. That is, you know not how to love aright;
Or, if you did, you would more difference see
Betwixt our souls, than 'twixt our quality.
Mark, if his birth makes any difference,
If to his words it adds one grain of sense.
That duty which his birth can make his due
I'll pay, but it shall not be paid by you:
For, if a prince courts her whom I adore,
He is my rival, and a prince no more.
Lyndar. And when did I my power so far resign,
That you should regulate each look of mine?
Abdelm. Then, when you gave your love, you gave that power.
Lyndar. 'Twas during pleasure, 'tis revoked this hour.
Now call me false, and rail on womankind,—

'Tis all the remedy you're like to find.
Abdelm. Yes, there's one more;
I'll hate you, and this visit is my last.
Lyndar. Do't if you can; you know I hold you fast:
Yet, for your quiet, would you could resign
Your love, as easily as I do mine.
Abdelm. Furies and hell, how unconcerned she speaks!
With what indifference all her vows she breaks!
Curse on me, but she smiles!
Lyndar. That smile's a part of love, and all's your due:
I take it from the prince, and give it you.
Abdelm. Just heaven, must my poor heart your May-game prove,
To bandy, and make children's play in love?
[*Half crying.*
Ah! how have I this cruelty deserved?
I, who so truly and so long have served!
And left so easily! oh, cruel maid!
So easily! 'Twas too unkindly said.
That heart which could so easily remove
Was never fixed, nor rooted deep in love.
Lyndar. You lodged it so uneasy in your breast,
I thought you had been weary of the guest.
First, I was treated like a stranger there;
But, when a household friend I did appear,
You thought, it seems, I could not live elsewhere.
Then, by degrees, your feigned respect withdrew;
You marked my actions, and my guardian grew.
But I am not concerned your acts to blame:
My heart to yours but upon liking came;
And, like a bird whom prying boys molest,
Stays not to breed where she had built her nest.
Abdelm. I have done ill,
And dare not ask you to be less displeased;
Be but more angry, and my pain is eased.
Lyndar. If I should be so kind a fool, to take
This little satisfaction which you make,
I know you would presume some other time
Upon my goodness, and repeat your crime.
Abdelm. Oh never, never, upon no pretence;
My life's too short to expiate this offence.
Lyndar. No, now I think on't, 'tis in vain to try;
'Tis in your nature, and past remedy,
You'll still disquiet my too loving heart:
Now we are friends, 'tis best for both to part.
Abdelm. [*taking her hand*]. By this—will you not give me leave to swear?
Lyndar. You would be perjured if you should, I fear:
And, when I talk with Prince Abdalla next,
I with your fond suspicions shall be vexed.
Abdelm. I cannot say I'll conquer jealousy,
But, if you'll freely pardon me, I'll try.
Lyndar. And, till you that submissive servant prove,
I neve. can conclude you truly love.

To them the King, Almahide, Abenamar, Esperanza, *Guards, Attendants.*

Boab. Approach, my Almahide, my charming fair,
Blessing of peace, and recompence of war.
This night is yours; and may your life still be
The same in joy, though not solemnity.

SONG

I

Beneath a myrtle shade,
Which love for none but happy lovers made,
I slept; and straight my love before me brought
Phyllis, the object of my waking thought.
Undressed she came my flames to meet,
While love strowed flowers beneath her feet;
Flowers which, so pressed by her, became more sweet.

II

From the bright vision's head
A careless veil of lawn was loosely spread:
From her white temples fell her shaded hair,
Like cloudy sunshine, not too brown nor fair;
Her hands, her lips, did love inspire;
Her every grace my heart did fire;
But most her eyes, which languished with desire.

III

"Ah, charming fair," said I,
"How long can you my bliss and yours deny?
By nature and by love this lonely shade
Was for revenge of suffering lovers made.
Silence and shades with love agree;
Both shelter you and favor me:
You cannot blush, because I cannot see."

IV

"No, let me die," she said,
"Rather than lose the spotless name of maid!"
Faintly, methought, she spoke; for all the while
She bid me not believe her, with a smile.
"Then die," said I: she still denied;
"And is it thus, thus, thus," she cried,
"You use a harmless maid?"—and so she died!

V

I waked, and straight I knew,
I loved so well, it made my dream prove true:

Fancy, the kinder mistress of the two,
Fancy had done what Phyllis would not do!
Ah, cruel nymph, cease your disdain;
While I can dream, you scorn in vain,—
Asleep or waking, you must ease my pain.

THE ZAMBRA DANCE.

[*After the dance, a tumultuous noise of drums and trumpets.*

To them OZMYN; *his sword drawn.*

Ozm. Arm, quickly, arm; yet all, I fear, too late;
The enemy's already at the gate.
Boab. The Christians are dislodged; what foe is near?
Ozm. The Zegrys are in arms, and almost here:
The streets with torches shine, with shoutings ring,
And Prince Abdalla is proclaimed the king.
What man could do, I have already done,
But bold Almanzor fiercely leads 'em on.
Aben. The Alhambra yet is safe in my command; [*To the* KING.
Retreat you thither, while their shock we stand.
Boab. I cannot meanly for my life provide;
I'll either perish in't, or stem this tide.
To guard the palace, Ozmyn, be your care:
If they o'ercome, no sword will hurt the fair.
Ozm. I'll either die, or I'll make good the place.
Abdelm. And I with these will bold Almanzor face.
[*Exeunt all but the Ladies. An alarm within.*
Almah. What dismal planet did my triumphs light!
Discord the day, and death does rule the night:
The noise my soul does through my senses wound.
Lyndar. Methinks it is a noble, sprightly sound,
The trumpet's clangor, and the clash of arms!
This noise may chill your blood, but mine it warms.
[*Shouting and clashing of swords within.*
We have already passed the Rubicon;
The dice are mine; now, fortune, for a throne!
[*A shout within, and clashing of swords afar off.*
The sound goes farther off, and faintly dies;
Curse of this going back, these ebbing cries!
Ye winds, waft hither sounds more strong and quick;
Beat faster, drums, and mingle deaths more thick.
I'll to the turrets of the palace go,
And add new fire to those that fight below:
Thence, Hero-like, with torches by my side
(Far be the omen, though) my love I'll guide.
No; like his better fortune I'll appear,
With open arms, loose veil, and flowing hair,
Just flying forward from my rolling sphere:
My smiles shall make Abdalla more than man;
Let him look up, and perish if he can. [*Exit.*

An alarm nearer: then enter ALMANZOR *and* SELIN *at the head of the Zegrys;* OZMYN, *prisoner.*

Almanz. We have not fought enough; they fly too soon;
And I am grieved the noble sport is done.
This only man, of all whom chance did bring
[*Pointing to* OZMYN.
To meet my arms, was worth the conquering.
His brave resistance did my fortune grace;
So slow, so threatening forward, he gave place.
His chains be easy, and his usage fair.
Selin. I beg you would commit him to my care.
Almanz. Next, the brave Spaniard free without delay;
And with a convoy send him safe away.
[*Exit a Guard.*

To them HAMET *and others.*

Hamet. The king by me salutes you; and, to show
That to your valor he his crown does owe,
Would from your mouth I should the word receive,
And that to these you would your orders give.
Almanz. He much o'errates the little I have done.
[ALMANZOR *goes to the door, and there seems to give out orders by sending people several ways.*
Selin [*to* OZMYN]. Now, to revenge the murder of my son,
To-morrow for thy certain death prepare;
This night I only leave thee to despair.
Ozmyn. Thy idle menaces I do not fear:
My business was to die or conquer here.
Sister, for you I grieve I could no more:
My present state betrays my want of power;
But, when true courage is of force bereft,
Patience, the noblest fortitude, is left.
[*Exit with* SELIN.
Almah. Ah, Esperanza, what for me remains
But death, or, worse than death, inglorious chains!
Esper. Madam, you must not to despair give place;
Heaven never meant misfortune to that face.
Suppose there were no justice in your cause,
Beauty's a bribe that gives her judges laws.

That you are brought to this deplored estate,
Is but the ingenious flattery of your fate;
Fate fears her succor like an alms to give;
And would you, God-like, from yourself should live.
Almah. Mark but how terrible his eyes appear!
And yet there's something roughly noble there,
Which, in unfashioned nature, looks divine,
And, like a gem, does in the quarry shine.
[Almanzor *returns; she falls at his feet, being veiled.*
Almah. Turn, mighty conqueror, turn your face this way,
Do not refuse to hear the wretched pray!
Almanz. What business can this woman have with me?
Almah. That of the afflicted to the Deity.
So may your arms success in battles find;
So may the mistress of your vows be kind,
If you have any; or, if you have none,
So may your liberty be still your own!
Almanz. Yes, I will turn my face, but not my mind:
You bane and soft destruction of mankind,
What would you have with me?
Almah. I beg the grace [*Unveiling.*
You would lay by those terrors of your face.
Till calmness to your eyes you first restore,
I am afraid, and I can beg no more.
Almanz. [*looking fixedly on her*]. Well; my fierce visage shall not murder you.
Speak quickly, woman; I have much to do.
Almah. Where should I find the heart to speak one word?
Your voice, sir, is as killing as your sword.
As you have left the lightning of your eye,
So would you please to lay your thunder by.
Almanz. I'm pleased and pained, since first her eyes I saw,
As I were stung with some tarantula.
Arms, and the dusty field, I less admire,
And soften strangely in some new desire;
Honor burns in me not so fiercely bright,
But pale as fires when mastered by the light:
Even while I speak and look, I change yet more,
And now am nothing that I was before.
I'm numbed, and fixed, and scarce my eyeballs move;
I fear it is the lethargy of love!
'Tis he; I feel him now in every part:
Like a new lord he vaunts about my heart;
Surveys, in state, each corner of my breast,
While poor fierce I, that was, am dispossessed.
I'm bound; but I will rouse my rage again;
And, though no hope of liberty remain,
I'll fright my keeper when I shake my chain.
You are—— [*Angrily.*
Almah. I know I am your captive, sir.
Almanz. You are—You shall—And I can scarce forbear——
Almah. Alas!
Almanz. 'Tis all in vain; it will not do:
[*Aside.*
I cannot now a seeming anger show:
My tongue against my heart no aid affords;
For love still rises up, and chokes my words.
Almah. In half this time a tempest would be still.
Almanz. 'Tis you have raised that tempest in my will.
I wonnot love you; give me back my heart;
But give it, as you had it, fierce and brave.
It was not made to be a woman's slave:
But, lion-like, has been in deserts bred,
And, used to range, will ne'er be tamely led.
Restore its freedom to my fettered will,
And then I shall have power to use you ill.
Almah. My sad condition may your pity move;
But look not on me with the eyes of love.—
I must be brief, though I have much to say.
Almanz. No, speak; for I can hear you now all day. [*Softly.*
Her suing soothes me with a secret pride:
A suppliant beauty cannot be denied: [*Aside.*
Even while I frown, her charms the furrows seize;
And I'm corrupted with the power to please.
Almah. Though in your worth no cause of fear I see,
I fear the insolence of victory;
As you are noble, sir, protect me then
From the rude outrage of insulting men.
Almanz. Who dares touch her I love? I'm all o'er love:
Nay, I am Love; Love shot, and shot so fast,
He shot himself into my breast at last.
Almah. You see before you her who should be queen,
Since she is promised to Boabdelin.
Almanz. Are you beloved by him? O wretched fate,
First, that I love at all; then, love too late!
Yet, I must love!
Almah. Alas, it is in vain;
Fate for each other did not us ordain.
The chances of this day too clearly show
That heaven took care that it should not be so.
Almanz. Would heaven had quite forgot me this one day!
But fate's yet hot——
I'll make it take a bent another way.
[*He walks swiftly and discomposedly, studying.*
I bring a claim which does his right remove;
You're his by promise, but you're mine by love.
'Tis all but ceremony which is past;
The knot's to tie which is to make you fast.
Fate gave not to Boabdelin that power;
He wooed you but as my ambassador.
Almah. Our souls are tied by holy vows above.

Almanz. He signed but his; but I will seal my love.
I love you better, with more zeal than he.
Almah. This day
I gave my faith to him, he his to me.
Almanz. Good heaven, thy book of fate before me lay,
But to tear out the journal of this day:
Or, if the order of the world below
Will not the gap of one whole day allow,
Give me that minute when she made her vow!
"That minute, ev'n the happy from their bliss might give;
"And those, who live in grief, a shorter time would live."
So small a link, if broke, the eternal chain
Would, like divided waters, join again.—
It wonnot be; the fugitive is gone,
Pressed by the crowd of following minutes on:
That precious moment's out of nature fled,
And in the heap of common rubbish laid,
Of things that once have been, and are decayed.
Almah. Your passion, like a fright, suspends my pain;
It meets, o'erpowers, and bears mine back again:
But as, when tides against the current flow,
The native stream runs its own course below,
So, though your griefs possess the upper part,
My own have deeper channels in my heart.
Almanz. Forgive that fury which my soul does move;
'Tis the essay of an untaught first love:
Yet rude, unfashioned truth it does express;
'Tis love just peeping in a hasty dress.
Retire, fair creature, to your needful rest;
There's something noble laboring in my breast:
This raging fire which through the mass does move
Shall purge my dross, and shall refine my love.

[*Exeunt* ALMAHIDE *and* ESPERANZA.

She goes, and I like my own ghost appear;
It is not living when she is not here.

To him ABDALLA *as King, attended.*

Abdal. My first acknowledgments to heaven are due;
My next, Almanzor, let me pay to you.
Almanz. A poor surprise, and on a naked foe,
Whatever you confess, is all you owe;
And I no merit own, or understand
That fortune did you justice by my hand:
Yet, if you will that little service pay
With a great favor, I can show the way.
Abdal. I have a favor to demand of you;
That is, to take the thing for which you sue.
Almanz. Then, briefly, thus: when I the Albayzin won,
I found the beauteous Almahide alone,
Whose sad condition did my pity move;
And that compassion did produce my love.
Abdal. This needs no suit; in justice, I declare,
She is your captive by the right of war.
Almanz. She is no captive then; I set her free;
And, rather than I will her jailer be,
I'll nobly lose her in her liberty.
Abdal. Your generosity I much approve;
But your excess of that shows want of love.
Almanz. No, 'tis the excess of love which mounts so high
That, seen far off, it lessens to the eye.
Had I not loved her, and had set her free,
That, sir, had been my generosity;
But 'tis exalted passion, when I show
I dare be wretched, not to make her so:
And, while another passion fills her breast,
I'll be all wretched rather than half blest.
Abdal. May your heroic act so prosperous be,
That Almahide may sigh you set her free.

Enter ZULEMA.

Zul. Of five tall towers which fortify this town,
All but the Alhambra your dominion own:
Now, therefore, boldly I confess a flame,
Which is excused in Almahida's name.
If you the merit of this night regard,
In her possession I have my reward.
Almanz. She your reward! why, she's a gift so great,
That I myself have not deserved her yet;
And therefore, though I won her with my sword,
I have, with awe, my sacrilege restored.
Zul. What you deserve
I'll not dispute because I do not know;
This only I will say, she shall not go.
Almanz. Thou, single, art not worth my answering:
But take what friends, what armies thou canst bring;
What worlds; and, when you are united all,
Then I will thunder in your ears: "She shall!"
Zul. I'll not one tittle of my right resign.
Sir, your implicit promise made her mine;
When I in general terms my love did show,
You swore our fortunes should together go.
Abdal. The merits of the cause I'll not decide,
But, like my love, I would my gift divide.
Your equal titles, then, no longer plead;
But one of you, for love of me, recede.
Almanz. I have receded to the utmost line,
When, by my free consent, she is not mine:
Then let him equally recede with me,

And both of us will join to set her free.
Zul. If you will free your part of her, you may;
But, sir, I love not your romantic way.
Dream on, enjoy her soul, and set that free;
I'm pleased her person should be left for me.
Almanz. Thou shalt not wish her thine; thou shalt not dare
To be so impudent as to despair.
Zul. The Zegrys, sir, are all concerned to see
How much their merit you neglect in me.
Hamet. Your slighting Zulema this very hour
Will take ten thousand subjects from your power.
Almanz. What are ten thousand subjects such as they?
If I am scorned——I'll take myself away.
Abdal. Since both cannot possess what both pursue,
I grieve, my friend, the chance should fall on you;
But when you hear what reasons I can urge——
Almanz. None, none that your ingratitude can purge.
Reason's a trick, when it no grant affords;
It stamps the face of majesty on words.
Abdal. Your boldness to your services I give:
Now take it, as your full reward—to live.
Almanz. To live!
If from thy hands alone my death can be,
I am immortal, and a god, to thee.
If I would kill thee now, thy fate's so low,
That I must stoop ere I can give the blow:
But mine is fixed so far above thy crown,
That all thy men,
Piled on thy back, can never pull it down.
But at my ease thy destiny I send,
By ceasing from this hour to be thy friend.
Like heaven, I need but only to stand still,
And, not concurring to thy life, I kill.
Thou canst no title to my duty bring;
I'm not thy subject, and my soul's thy king.
Farewell. When I am gone,
There's not a star of thine dare stay with thee:
I'll whistle thy tame fortune after me;
And whirl fate with me wheresoe'er I fly,
As winds drive storms before 'em in the sky.
[*Exit.*
Zul. Let not this insolent unpunished go;
Give your commands; your justice is too slow.
[ZULEMA, HAMET, *and others are going after him.*
Abdal. Stay, and what part he pleases let him take:
I know my throne's too strong for him to shake.
But my fair mistress I too long forget;
The crown I promised is not offered yet.
Without her presence all my joys are vain,
Empire a curse, and life itself a pain.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

BOABDELIN, ABENAMAR, *Guards.*

Boab. Advise, or aid, but do not pity me:
No monarch born can fall to that degree.
Pity descends from kings to all below;
But can, no more than fountains, upward flow.
Witness, just heaven, my greatest grief has been,
I could not make your Almahide a queen.
Aben. I have too long the effects of fortune known,
Either to trust her smiles, or fear her frown.
Since in their first attempt you were not slain,
Your safety bodes you yet a second reign.
The people like a headlong torrent go,
And every dam they break, or overflow;
But, unopposed, they either lose their force,
Or wind in volumes to their former course.
Boab. In walls we meanly must our hopes enclose,
To wait our friends, and weary out our foes:
While Almahide
To lawless rebels is exposed a prey,
And forced the lustful victor to obey.
Aben. One of my blood, in rules of virtue bred!
Think better of her, and believe she's dead.

To them ALMANZOR.

Boab. We are betrayed, the enemy is here;
We have no farther room to hope or fear.
Almanz. It is indeed Almanzor whom you see,
But he no longer is your enemy.
You were ungrateful, but your foes were more;
What your injustice lost you, theirs restore.
Make profit of my vengeance while you may;
My two-edged sword can cut the other way.—
I am your fortune, but am swift like her,
And turn my hairy front if you defer:
That hour when you deliberate, is too late;
I point you the white moment of your fate.
Aben. Believe him sent as prince Abdalla's spy;
He would betray us to the enemy.
Almanz. Were I, like thee, in cheats of state grown old
(Those public markets, where for foreign gold
The poorer prince is to the richer sold),
Then thou mightst think me fit for that low part;
But I am yet to learn the statesman's art.

My kindness and my hate unmasked I wear;
For friends to trust, and enemies to fear.
My heart's so plain
That men on every passing thought may look,
Like fishes gliding in a crystal brook;
When troubled most, it does the bottom show;
'Tis weedless all above, and rockless all below.

Aben. Ere he be trusted, let him first be tried;
He may be false, who once has changed his side.

Almanz. In that you more accuse yourselves than me;
None who are injured can unconstant be.
You were unconstant, you, who did the wrong;
To do me justice does to me belong.
Great souls by kindness only can be tied;
Injured again, again I'll leave your side.
Honor is what myself, and friends, I owe;
And none can lose it who forsake a foe.
Since, then, your foes now happen to be mine,
Though not in friendship, we'll in interest join:
So while my loved revenge is full and high,
I'll give you back your kingdom by the by.

Boab. [*embracing him*]. That I so long delayed what you desire,
Was not to doubt your worth, but to admire.

Almanz. This counsellor an old man's caution shows,
Who fears that little he has left to lose:
Age sets to fortune; while youth boldly throws.
But let us first your drooping soldiers cheer;
Then seek out danger, ere it dare appear:
This hour I fix your crown upon your brow;
Next hour fate gives it, but I give it now.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

LYNDARAXA *alone.*

Lyndar. O, could I read the dark decrees of fate,
That I might once know whom to love, or hate!
For I myself scarce my own thoughts can guess,
So much I find 'em varied by success.
As in some weather-glass, my love I hold;
Which falls or rises with the heat or cold.
I will be constant yet, if Fortune can;
I love the king,—let her but name the man.

To her HALYMA.

Hal. Madam, a gentleman, to me unknown,
Desires that he may speak with you alone.

Lyndar. Some message from the king. Let him appear.

To her ABDELMELECH; *who entering throws off his disguise. She starts.*

Abdelm. I see you are amazed that I am here:
But let at once your fear and wonder end.
In the usurper's guard I found a friend,
Who led me to you safe in this disguise.

Lyndar. Your danger brings this trouble in my eyes.
But what affair this venturous visit drew?

Abdelm. The greatest in the world,—the seeing you.

Lyndar. The courage of your love I so admire
That, to preserve you, you shall straight retire. [*She leads him to the door.*
Go, dear! each minute does new dangers bring;
You will be taken; I expect the king.

Abdelm. The king!—the poor usurper of an hour:
His empire's but a dream of kingly power.—
I warn you, as a lover and a friend,
To leave him ere his short dominion end:
The soldier I suborned will wait at night,
And shall alone be conscious of your flight.

Lyndar. I thank you that you so much care bestow;
But, if his reign be short, I need not go.
For why should I expose my life and yours
For what, you say, a little time assures?

Abdelm. My danger in the attempt is very small;
And, if he loves you, yours is none at all.
But, though his ruin be as sure as fate,
Your proof of love to me would come too late.
This trial I in kindness would allow;
'Tis easy; if you love me, show it now.

Lyndar. It is because I love you, I refuse;
For all the world my conduct would accuse,
If I should go with him I love away:
And, therefore, in strict virtue I will stay.

Abdelm. You would in vain dissemble love to me;
Through that thin veil your artifice I see.
You would expect the event, and then declare;
But do not, do not drive me to despair:
For, if you now refuse with me to fly,
Rather than love you after this, I'll die;
And therefore weigh it well before you speak;
My king is safe, his force within not weak.

Lyndar. The counsel you have given me may be wise;
But, since the affair is great, I will advise.

Abdelm. Then that delay I for denial take. [*Is going.*

Lyndar. Stay; you too swift an exposition make.

If I should go, since Zulema will stay,
I should my brother to the king betray.
Abdelm. There is no fear; but, if there were, I see
You value still your brother more than me.
Farewell! some ease I in your falsehood find;
It lets a beam in that will clear my mind:
My former weakness I with shame confess,
And, when I see you next, shall love you less.
[*Is going again.*
Lyndar. Your faithless dealing you may blush to tell; [*Weeping.*
This is a maid's reward, who loves too well.— [*He looks back.*
Remember that I drew my latest breath
In charging your unkindness with my death.
Abdelm. [*coming back*]. Have I not answered all you can invent,
Even the least shadow of an argument?
Lyndar. You want not cunning what you please to prove,
But my poor heart knows only how to love;
And, finding this, you tyrannize the more:
'Tis plain, some other mistress you adore;
And now, with studied tricks of subtilty,
You come prepared to lay the fault on me.
[*Wringing her hands.*
But, O, that I should love so false a man!
Abdelm. Hear me, and then disprove it, if you can.
Lyndar. I'll hear no more; your breach of faith is plain:
You would with wit your want of love maintain.
But, by my own experience, I can tell,
They who love truly cannot argue well.—
Go, faithless man!
Leave me alone to mourn my misery;
I cannot cease to love you, but I'll die.
[*Leans her head on his arm.*
Abdelm. What man but I so long unmoved could hear [*Weeping.*
Such tender passion, and refuse a tear!
But do not talk of dying any more,
Unless you mean that I should die before.
Lyndar. I fear your feigned repentance comes too late;
I die, to see you still thus obstinate:
But yet, in death my truth of love to show,
Lead me; if I have strength enough, I'll go.
Abdelm. By heaven, you shall not go! I will not be
O'ercome in love or generosity.
All I desire, to end the unlucky strife,
Is but a vow that you will be my wife.
Lyndar. To tie me to you by a vow is hard;
It shows my love you as no tie regard.
Name anything but that, and I'll agree.
Abdelm. Swear, then, you never will my rival's be.
Lyndar. Nay, pr'ythee, this is harder than before.
Name anything, good dear, but that thing more.
Abdelm. Now I too late perceive I am undone;
Living and seeing, to my death I run.
I know you false, yet in your snares I fall;
You grant me nothing, and I grant you all.
Lyndar. I would grant all; but I must curb my will,
Because I love to keep you jealous still.
In your suspicion I your passion find;
But I will take a time to cure your mind.
Halyma. O, madam, the new king is drawing near!
Lyndar. Haste quickly hence, lest he should find you here!
Abdelm. How much more wretched than I came, I go!
I more my weakness and your falsehood know;
And now must leave you with my greatest foe! [*Exit* Abdelm.
Lyndar. Go!—How I love thee, heaven can only tell:
And yet I love thee, for a subject, well.—
Yet, whatsoever charms a crown can bring,
A subject's greater than a little king.
I will attend till time this throne secure;
And, when I climb, my footing shall be sure.— [*Music without.*
Music! and, I believe, addressed to me.

SONG

I

Wherever I am, and whatever I do,
My Phyllis is still in my mind;
When angry, I mean not to Phyllis to go,
My feet, of themselves, the way find;
Unknown to myself I am just at her door,
And, when I would rail, I can bring out no more,
Than, "Phyllis too fair and unkind!"

II

When Phyllis I see, my heart bounds in my breast,
And the love I would stifle is shown;
But asleep, or awake, I am never at rest,
When from my eyes Phyllis is gone.
Sometimes a sad dream does delude my sad mind;
But, alas! when I wake, and no Phyllis I find,
How I sigh to myself all alone!

III

Should a king be my rival in her I adore,
He should offer his treasure in vain·
O, let me alone to be happy and poor,
And give me my Phyllis again!
Let Phyllis be mine, and but ever be kind,
I could to a desert with her be confined,
And envy no monarch his reign.

IV

Alas! I discover too much of my love,
And she too well knows her own power!
She makes me each day a new martyrdom prove,
And makes me grow jealous each hour:
But let her each minute torment my poor mind,
I had rather love Phyllis, both false and unkind,
Than ever be freed from her power.

Enter Abdalla, *with Guards.*

Abdal. Now, madam, at your feet a king you see;
Or, rather, if you please, a sceptred slave;
'Tis just you should possess the power you gave.
Had love not made me yours, I yet had been
But the first subject to Boabdelin.
Thus heaven declares the crown I bring your due;
And had forgot my title, but for you.
Lyndar. Heaven to your merits will, I hope, be kind;
But, sir, it has not yet declared its mind.
'Tis true, it holds the crown above your head;
But does not fix it till your brother's dead.
Abdal. All but the Alhambra is within my power;
And that my forces go to take this hour.
Lyndar. When, with its keys, your brother's head you bring,
I shall believe you are indeed a king.
Abdal. But since the events of all things doubtful are,
And, of events, most doubtful those of war;
I beg to know before, if fortune frown,
Must I then lose your favor with my crown?
Lyndar. You'll soon return a conqueror again;
And, therefore, sir, your question is in vain.
Abdal. I think to certain victory I move;
But you may more assure it by your love.
That grant will make my arms invincible.
Lyndar. My prayers and wishes your success foretell.—
Go then, and fight, and think you fight for me;
I wait but to reward your victory.
Abdal. But if I lose it, must I lose you too?
Lyndar. You are too curious, if you more would know.
I know not what my future thoughts will be:
Poor women's thoughts are all *extempore.*
Wise men, indeed,
Beforehand a long chain of thoughts produce;
But ours are only for our present use.
Abdal. Those thoughts, you will not know, too well declare
You mean to wait the final doom of war.
Lyndar. I find you come to quarrel with me now;
Would you know more of me than I allow?
Whence are you grown that great divinity
That with such ease into my thoughts can pry?
Indulgence does not with some tempers suit;
I see I must become more absolute.
Abdal. I must submit,
On what hard terms soe'er my peace be bought.
Lyndar. Submit!—you speak as you were not in fault.
'Tis evident the injury is mine;
For why should you my secret thoughts divine?
Abdal. Yet if we might be judged by reason's laws!—
Lyndar. Then you would have your reason judge my cause!—
Either confess your fault, or hold your tongue;
For I am sure I'm never in the wrong.
Abdal. Then I acknowledge it.
Lyndar. Then I forgive.
Abdal. Under how hard a law poor lovers live!
Who, like the vanquished, must their right release,
And with the loss of reason buy their peace.— [*Aside.*
Madam, to show that you my power command,
I put my life and safety in your hand.
Dispose of the Albayzin as you please,
To your fair hands I here resign the keys.
Lyndar. I take your gift, because your love it shows,
And faithful Selin for alcalde choose.
Abdal. Selin, from her alone your orders take.
This one request, yet, madam, let me make,
That from those turrets you the assault will see;
And crown, once more, my arms with victory. [*Leads her out.*

Selin *remains with* Gazul *and* Reduan, *his servants.*

Selin. Gazul, go tell my daughter that I wait.
You, Reduan, bring the prisoner to his fate.
[*Exeunt* Gaz. *and* Red.
Ere of my charge I will possession take,
A bloody sacrifice I mean to make:
The manes of my son shall smile this day,
While I, in blood, my vows of vengeance pay.

Enter at one door Benzayda, *with* Gazul; *at the other,* Ozmyn *bound, with* Reduan.

Selin. I sent, Benzayda, to glad your eyes:
These rites we owe your brother's obsequies.—

You two [*to* GAZ. *and* RED.] the accurst
Abencerrago bind:
You need no more to instruct you in my mind.
[*They bind him to one corner of the stage.*
Benz. In what sad object am I called to share?
Tell me, what is it, sir, you here prepare?
Selin. 'Tis what your dying brother did bequeath:
A scene of vengeance, and a pomp of death!
Benz. The horrid spectacle my soul does fright;
I want the heart to see the dismal sight.
Selin. You are my principal invited guest,
Whose eyes I would not only feed, but feast:
You are to smile at his last groaning breath,
And laugh to see his eyeballs roll in death;
To judge the lingering soul's convulsive strife,
When thick short breath catches at parting life.
Benz. And of what marble do you think me made?
Selin. What! can you be of just revenge afraid?
Benz. He killed my brother in his own defence.
Pity his youth, and spare his innocence.
Selin. Art thou so soon to pardon murder won?
Can he be innocent, who killed my son?
Abenamar shall mourn as well as I;
His Ozmyn, for my Tarifa, shall die.
But since thou plead'st so boldly, I will see
That justice thou wouldst hinder done by thee.
Here—[*gives her his sword*]—take the sword, and do a sister's part:
Pierce his, fond girl, or I will pierce thy heart.
Ozm. To his commands I join my own request;
All wounds from you are welcome to my breast:
Think only, when your hand this act has done,
It has but finished what your eyes begun.
I thought with silence to have scorned my doom;
But now your noble pity has o'ercome;
Which I acknowledge with my latest breath,—
The first whoe'er began a love in death.
Benz. [*to* SELIN]. Alas, what aid can my weak hand afford?
You see I tremble when I touch a sword:
The brightness dazzles me, and turns my sight;
Or, if I look, 'tis but to aim less right.
Ozm. I'll guide the hand which must my death convey;
My leaping heart shall meet it half the way.
Selin [*to* BENZ.]. Waste not the precious time in idle breath.
Benz. Let me resign this instrument of death.
[*Giving the sword to her father, and then pulling it back.*
Ah, no! I was too hasty to resign:
'Tis in your hand more mortal than in mine.

To them HAMET.

Hamet. The king is from the Alhambra beaten back,
And now preparing for a new attack;
To favor which, he wills that instantly
You reinforce him with a new supply.
Selin [*to* BENZ.]. Think not, although my duty calls me hence,
That with the breach of yours I will dispense.
Ere my return see my commands you do:
Let me find Ozmyn dead, and killed by you.—
Gazul and Reduan, attend her still;
And, if she dares to fail, perform my will.
[*Exeunt* SELIN *and* HAMET.

[BENZAYDA *looks languishing on him, with her sword down;* GAZUL *and* REDUAN *standing with drawn swords by her.*

Ozm. Defer not, fair Benzayda, my death:
Looking on you,
I should but live to sigh away my breath.
My eyes have done the work they had to do:
I take your image with me, which they drew;
And, when they close, I shall die full of you.
Benz. When parents their commands unjustly lay,
Children are privileged to disobey;
Yet from that breach of duty I am clear,
Since I submit the penalty to bear.
To die, or kill you, is the alternative;
Rather than take your life, I will not live.
Ozm. This shows the excess of generosity;
But, madam, you have no pretence to die.
I should defame the Abencerrages' race,
To let a lady suffer in my place.
But neither could that life, you would bestow,
Save mine; nor do you so much pity owe
To me, a stranger, and your house's foe.
Benz. From whencesoe'er their hate our houses drew,
I blush to tell you, I have none for you.
'Tis a confession which I should not make,
Had I more time to give, or you to take:
But, since death's near, and runs with so much force,
We must meet first, and intercept his course.
Ozm. O, how unkind a comfort do you give!
Now I fear death again, and wish to live.
Life were worth taking, could I have it now;
But 'tis more good than heaven can e'er allow

To one man's portion, to have life and you.
Benz. Sure, at our births,
Death with our meeting planets danced above,
Or we were wounded by a mourning love!
[*Shouts within.*
Red. The noise returns, and doubles from behind;
It seems as if two adverse armies joined.—
Time presses us.
Gaz. If longer you delay,
We must, though loth, your father's will obey.
Ozm. Haste, madam, to fulfil his hard commands,
And rescue me from their ignoble hands.
Let me kiss yours, when you my wound begin,
Then easy death will slide with pleasure in.
Benz. Ah, gentle soldiers, some short time allow! [*To* Gaz. *and* Red.
My father has repented him ere now;
Or will repent him, when he finds me dead.
My clue of life is twined with Ozmyn's thread.
Red. 'Tis fatal to refuse her, or obey.
But where is our excuse? what can we say?
Benz. Say anything—
Say that to kill the guiltless you were loth;
Or if you did, say I would kill you both.
Gaz. To disobey our orders is to die.—
I'll do't: who dare oppose it?
Red. That dare I.

[Reduan *stands before* Ozmyn, *and fights with* Gazul. Benzayda *unbinds* Ozmyn, *and gives him her sword.*

Benz. Stay not to see the issue of the fight; [Red. *kills* Gaz.
But haste to save yourself by speedy flight.
Ozm. [*kneeling to kiss her hand*]. Did all mankind against my life conspire,
Without this blessing I would not retire.
But, madam, can I go and leave you here?
Your father's anger now for you I fear:
Consider, you have done too much to stay.
Benz. Think not of me, but fly yourself away.
Red. Haste quickly hence; the enemies are nigh!
From every part I see our soldiers fly.
The foes not only our assailants beat,
But fiercely sally out on their retreat,
And, like a sea broke loose, come on amain.

To them Abenamar, *and a party with their swords drawn, driving in some of the enemies.*

Aben. Traitors, you hope to save yourselves in vain!
Your forfeit lives shall for your treason pay;
And Ozmyn's blood shall be revenged this day.
Ozm. [*kneeling to his father*]. No, sir, your Ozmyn lives; and lives to own
A father's piety to free his son.
Aben. [*embracing him*]. My Ozmyn!—O, thou blessing of my age!
And art thou safe from their deluded rage!—
Whom must I praise for thy deliverance?
Was it thy valor, or the work of chance?
Ozm. Nor chance, nor valor, could deliver me;
But 'twas a noble pity set me free.
My liberty, and life,
And what your happiness you're pleased to call,
We to this charming beauty owe it all.
Aben. [*to her*]. Instruct me, visible divinity!
Instruct me by what name to worship thee!
For to thy virtue I would altars raise,
Since thou art much above all human praise.
But see——

Enter Almanzor, *his sword bloody, leading in* Almahide, *attended by* Esperanza.

My other blessing, Almahide, is here!
I'll to the king, and tell him she is near:
You, Ozmyn, on your fair deliverer wait,
And with your private joys the public celebrate. [*Exeunt* Aben., Ozm., *and* Benz.
Almanz. The work is done; now, madam, you are free;
At least, if I can give you liberty:
But you have chains which you yourself have chose;
And, O, that I could free you too from those!
But you are free from force, and have full power
To go, and kill my hopes and me, this hour.
I see, then, you will go; but yet my toil
May be rewarded with a looking-while.
Almah. Almanzor can from every subject raise
New matter for our wonder and his praise.
You bound and freed me; but the difference is,
That showed your valor; but your virtue this.
Almanz. Madam, you praise a funeral victory,
At whose sad pomp the conqueror must die.
Almah. Conquest attends Almanzor everywhere;
I am too small a foe for him to fear:
But heroes still must be opposed by some,
Or they would want occasion to o'ercome.
Almanz. Madam, I cannot on bare praises live;
Those who abound in praises seldom give.
Almah. While I to all the world your worth make known,
May heaven reward the pity you have shown!
Almanz. My love is languishing, and starved to death;

And would you give me charity—in breath?
Prayers are the alms of churchmen to the poor:
They send to heaven's, but drive us from their door.
Almah. Cease, cease a suit
So vain to you, and troublesome to me,
If you will have me think that I am free.
If I am yet a slave, my bonds I'll bear;
But what I cannot grant, I will not hear.
Almanz. You wonnot hear! You must both hear and grant;
For, madam, there's an impudence in want.
Almah. Your way is somewhat strange to ask relief;
You ask with threatening, like a begging thief.
Once more, Almanzor, tell me, am I free?
Almanz. Madam, you are, from all the world,—but me!
But as a pirate, when he frees the prize
He took from friends, sees the rich merchandise,
And, after he has freed it, justly buys;
So, when I have restored your liberty—
But then, alas, I am too poor to buy!
Almah. Nay, now you use me just as pirates do:
You free me; but expect a ransom too.
Almanz. You've all the freedom that a prince can have;
But greatness cannot be without a slave.
A monarch never can in private move,
But still is haunted with officious love.
So small an inconvenience you may bear;
'Tis all the fine Fate sets upon the fair.
Almah. Yet princes may retire whene'er they please,
And breathe free air from out their palaces:
They go sometimes unknown, to shun their state;
And then 'tis manners not to know or wait.
Almanz. If not a subject, then a ghost I'll be;
And from a ghost, you know, no place is free.
Asleep, awake, I'll haunt you everywhere;
From my white shroud groan love into your ear:
When in your lover's arms you sleep at night,
I'll glide in cold betwixt, and seize my right:
And is't not better, in your nuptial bed,
To have a living lover than a dead?
Almah. I can no longer bear to be accused,
As if, what I could grant you, I refused.
My father's choice I never will dispute;
And he has chosen ere you moved your suit.
You know my case; if equal you can be,
Plead for yourself, and answer it for me.
Almanz. Then, madam, in that hope you bid me live;
I ask no more than you may justly give:
But in strict justice there may favor be,
And may I hope that you have that for me?
Almah. Why do you thus my secret thoughts pursue,
Which, known, hurt me, and cannot profit you?
Your knowledge but new troubles does prepare,
Like theirs who curious in their fortunes are.
To say, I could with more content be yours,
Tempts you to hope; but not that hope assures.
For since the king has right,
And favored by my father in his suit,
It is a blossom which can bear no fruit.
Yet, if you dare attempt so hard a task,
May you succeed; you have my leave to ask.
Almanz. I can with courage now my hopes pursue,
Since I no longer have to combat you.
That did the greatest difficulty bring;
The rest are small, a father and a king!
Almah. Great souls discern not when the leap's too wide,
Because they only view the farther side.
Whatever you desire, you think is near;
But, with more reason, the event I fear.
Almanz. No; there is a necessity in fate,
Why still the brave bold man is fortunate:
He keeps his object ever full in sight,
And that assurance holds him firm and right.
True, 'tis a narrow path that leads to bliss,
But right before there is no precipice:
Fear makes men look aside, and then their footing miss.
Almah. I do your merit all the right I can;
Admiring virtue in a private man;
I only wish the king may grateful be,
And that my father with my eyes may see.
Might I not make it as my last request,—
Since humble carriage suits a suppliant best,—
That you would somewhat of your fierceness hide—
That inborn fire—I do not call it pride?
Almanz. Born, as I am, still to command, not sue,
Yet you shall see that I can beg for you;
And if your father will require a crown,
Let him but name the kingdom, 'tis his own.
I am, but while I please, a private man;
I have that soul which empires first began.
From the dull crowd, which every king does lead,
I will pick out whom I will choose to head:
The best and bravest souls I can select,
And on their conquered necks my throne erect. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I

Abdalla *alone, under the walls of the Albayzin.*

Abdal. While she is mine, I have not yet lost all,
But in her arms shall have a gentle fall:
Blest in my love, although in war o'ercome,
I fly, like Antony from Actium,
To meet a better Cleopatra here.—
You of the watch! you of the watch! appear.
Sold. [*above*]. Who calls below? What's your demand?
Abdal. 'Tis I:
Open the gate with speed; the foe is nigh.
Sold. What orders for admittance do you bring?
Abdal. Slave, my own orders: look, and know the king.
Sold. I know you; but my charge is so severe
That none, without exception, enter here.
Abdal. Traitor, and rebel! thou shalt shortly see
Thy orders are not to extend to me.
Lyndar. [*above*]. What saucy slave so rudely does exclaim,
And brands my subject with a rebel's name?
Abdal. Dear Lyndaraxa, haste; the foes pursue.
Lyndar. My lord, the Prince Abdalla, is it you?
I scarcely can believe the words I hear;
Could you so coarsely treat my officer?
Abdal. He forced me; but the danger nearer draws:
When I am entered, you shall know the cause.
Lyndar. Entered! Why, have you any business here?
Abdal. I am pursued, the enemy is near.
Lyndar. Are you pursued, and do you thus delay
To save yourself? Make haste, my lord, away.
Abdal. Give me not cause to think you mock my grief:
What place have I, but this, for my relief?
Lyndar. This favor does your handmaid much oblige,
But we are not provided for a siege:
My subjects few; and their provision thin;
The foe is strong without, we weak within.
This to my noble lord may seem unkind,
But he will weigh it in his princely mind;
And pardon her, who does assurance want
So much, she blushes when she cannot grant.
Abdal. Yes, you may blush; and you have cause to weep.
Is this the faith you promised me to keep?
Ah yet, if to a lover you will bring
No succor, give your succor to a king.
Lyndar. A king is he, whom nothing can withstand;
Who men and money can with ease command.
A king is he, whom fortune still does bless;
He is a king, who does a crown possess.
If you would have me think that you are he,
Produce to view your marks of sovereignty;
But if yourself alone for proof you bring,
You're but a single person, not a king.
Abdal. Ingrateful maid, did I for this rebel?
I say no more; but I have loved too well.
Lyndar. Who but yourself did that rebellion move?
Did I e'er promise to receive your love?
Is it my fault you are not fortunate?
I love a king, but a poor rebel hate.
Abdal. Who follow fortune, still are in the right;
But let me be protected here this night.
Lyndar. The place to-morrow will be circled round;
And then no way will for your flight be found.
Abdal. I hear my enemies just coming on; [*Trampling within.*
Protect me but one hour, till they are gone.
Lyndar. They'll know you have been here; it cannot be;
That very hour you stay, will ruin me:
For if the foe behold our interview,
I shall be thought a rebel too, like you.
Haste hence; and that your flight may prosperous prove,
I'll recommend you to the powers above.
[*Exit* Lynd. *from above.*
Abdal. She's gone! Ah, faithless and ingrateful maid!
I hear some tread; and fear I am betrayed.
I'll to the Spanish king; and try if he,
To countenance his own right, will succor me:
There is more faith in Christian dogs, than thee. [*Exit.*

Scene II

Ozmyn, Benzayda, Abenamar.

Benz. I wish
(To merit all these thanks) I could have said,
My pity only did his virtue aid;
'Twas pity, but 'twas of a love-sick maid.
His manly suffering my esteem did move;
That bred compassion, and compassion love.
Ozm. O blessing sold me at too cheap a rate! [*To his father.*
My danger was the benefit of fate.
But that you may my fair deliverer know,
She was not only born our house's foe,
But to my death by powerful reasons led;
At least, in justice, she might wish me dead.

Aben. But why thus long do you her name conceal?
Ozm. To gain belief for what I now reveal:
Even thus prepared, you scarce can think it true,
The saver of my life from Selin drew
Her birth; and was his sister whom I slew.
Aben. No more; it cannot, was not, must not be:
Upon my blessing, say not it was she.
The daughter of the only man I hate!
Two contradictions twisted in a fate!
Ozm. The mutual hate, which you and Selin bore,
Does but exalt her generous pity more.
Could she a brother's death forgive to me,
And cannot you forget her family?
Can you so ill requite the life I owe,
To reckon her, who gave it, still your foe?
It lends too great a lustre to her line,
To let her virtue ours so much outshine.
Aben. Thou giv'st her line the advantage which they have,
By meanly taking of the life they gave.
Grant that it did in her a pity show;
But would my son be pitied by a foe?
She has the glory of thy act defaced:
Thou killedst her brother; but she triumphs last:
Poorly for us our enmity would cease;
When we are beaten, we receive a peace.
Benz. If that be all in which you disagree,
I must confess 'twas Ozmyn conquered me.
Had I beheld him basely beg his life,
I should not now submit to be his wife;
But when I saw his courage death control,
I paid a secret homage to his soul;
And thought my cruel father much to blame,
Since Ozmyn's virtue his revenge did shame.
Aben. What constancy canst thou e'er hope to find
In that unstable, and soon conquered mind?
What piety canst thou expect from her,
Who could forgive a brother's murderer?
Or, what obedience hop'st thou to be paid,
From one who first her father disobeyed?
Ozm. Nature, that bids us parents to obey,
Bids parents their commands by reason weigh;
And you her virtue by your praise did own,
Before you knew by whom the act was done.
Aben. Your reasons speak too much of insolence;
Her birth's a crime past pardon or defence.
Know, that as Selin was not won by thee,
Neither will I by Selin's daughter be.
Leave her, or cease henceforth to be my son:
This is my will; and this I will have done.
[*Exit* Aben.
Ozm. It is a murdering will,
That whirls along with an impetuous sway,
And, like chain-shot, sweeps all things in its way.
He does my honor want of duty call;
To that, and love, he has no right at all.
Benz. No, Ozmyn, no; it is a much less ill
To leave me, than dispute a father's will:
If I had any title to your love,
Your father's greater right does mine remove:
Your vows and faith I give you back again,
Since neither can be kept without a sin.
Ozm. Nothing but death my vows can give me back:
They are not yours to give, nor mine to take.
Benz. Nay, think not, though I could your vows resign,
My love or virtue could dispense with mine.
I would extinguish your unlucky fire,
To make you happy in some new desire:
I can preserve enough for me and you,
And love, and be unfortunate, for two.
Ozm. In all that's good and great
You vanquish me so fast, that in the end
I shall have nothing left me to defend.
From every post you force me to remove;
But let me keep my last retrenchment, love.
Benz. Love then, my Ozmyn; I will be content [*Giving her hand.*
To make you wretched by your own consent:
Live poor, despised, and banished for my sake,
And all the burden of my sorrows take;
For, as for me, in whatsoe'er estate,
While I have you, I must be fortunate.
Ozm. Thus then, secured of what we hold most dear,
(Each other's love) we'll go—I know not where.
For where, alas, should we our flight begin?
The foe's without; our parents are within.
Benz. I'll fly to you, and you shall fly to me;
Our flight but to each other's arms shall be.
To providence and chance permit the rest;
Let us but love enough, and we are blest.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Enter Boabdelin, Abenamar, Abdelmelech, *Guard:* Zulema *and* Hamet, *prisoners.*

Abdelm. They're Lyndaraxa's brothers; for her sake,
Their lives and pardon my request I make.
Boab. Then, Zulema and Hamet, live; but know,
Your lives to Abdelmelech's suit you owe.
Zul. The grace received so much my hope exceeds
That words come weak and short to answer deeds.

You've made a venture, sir, and time must show
If this great mercy you did well bestow.
Boab. You, Abdelmelech, haste before 'tis night,
And close pursue my brother in his flight.
[*Exeunt* Abdelmelech, Zulema, Hamet.

Enter Almanzor, Almahide, *and* Esperanza.

But see, with Almahide
The brave Almanzor comes, whose conquering sword
The crown, it once took from me, has restored.
How can I recompence so great desert!
Almanz. I bring you, sir, performed in every part,
My promise made; your foes are fled or slain;
Without a rival, absolute you reign.
Yet though, in justice, this enough may be,
It is too little to be done by me:
I beg to go,
Where my own courage and your fortune calls,
To chase these misbelievers from our walls.
I cannot breathe within this narrow space;
My heart's too big, and swells beyond the place.
Boab. You can perform, brave warrior, what you please;
Fate listens to your voice, and then decrees.
Now I no longer fear the Spanish powers;
Already we are free, and conquerors.
Almanz. Accept, great king, to-morrow, from my hand,
The captive head of conquered Ferdinand.
You shall not only what you lost regain,
But o'er the Biscayn mountains to the main,
Extend your sway, where never Moor did reign.
Aben. What, in another, vanity would seem,
Appears but noble confidence in him;
No haughty boasting, but a manly pride;
A soul too fiery, and too great to guide:
He moves eccentric, like a wandering star,
Whose motion's just, though 'tis not regular.
Boab. It is for you, brave man, and only you,
Greatly to speak, and yet more greatly do.
But, if your benefits too far extend,
I must be left ungrateful in the end:
Yet somewhat I would pay,
Before my debts above all reckoning grow,
To keep me from the shame of what I owe.
But you
Are conscious to yourself of such desert,
That of your gift I fear to offer part.
Almanz. When I shall have declared my high request,
So much presumption there will be confessed,
That you will find your gifts I do not shun,
But rather much o'er-rate the service done.
Boab. Give wing to your desires, and let 'em fly,
Secure they cannot mount a pitch too high.
So bless me, Allah, both in peace and war,
As I accord whate'er your wishes are.
Almanz. Emboldened by the promise of a prince,
[*Putting one knee on the ground.*
I ask this lady now with confidence.
Boab. You ask the only thing I cannot grant.
[*The King and* Abenamar *look amazedly on each other.*
But, as a stranger, you are ignorant
Of what by public fame my subjects know;
She is my mistress.
Aben. —And my daughter too.
Almanz. Believe, old man, that I her father knew:
What else should make Almanzor kneel to you?
Nor doubt, sir, but your right to her was known:
For had you had no claim but love alone,
I could produce a better of my own.
Almah. [*softly to him*]. Almanzor, you forget my last request:
Your words have too much haughtiness expressed.
Is this the humble way you were to move?
Almanz. [*to her*]. I was too far transported by my love.
Forgive me; for I had not learned to sue
To anything before, but heaven and you,—
Sir, at your feet, I make it my request—
[*To the King.*
First line kneeling: second, rising, and boldly.
Though, without boasting, I deserve her best;
For you her love with gaudy titles sought,
But I her heart with blood and dangers bought.
Boab. The blood which you have shed in her defence
Shall have in time a fitting recompence:
Or, if you think your services delayed,
Name but your price, and you shall soon be paid.
Almanz. My price! Why, king, you do not think you deal
With one who sets his services to sale?
Reserve your gifts for those who gifts regard;
And know, I think myself above reward.
Boab. Then sure you are some godhead; and our care
Must be to come with incense and with prayer.
Almanz. As little as you think yourself obliged,
You would be glad to do't, when next besieged.

But I am pleased there should be nothing due;
For what I did was for myself, not you.
Boab. You with contempt on meaner gifts look down;
And, aiming at my queen, disdain my crown.
That crown, restored, deserves no recompence,
Since you would rob the fairest jewel thence.
Dare not henceforth ungrateful me to call;
Whate'er I owed you, this has cancelled all.
Almanz. I'll call thee thankless, king, and perjured both:
Thou swor'st by Allah, and hast broke thy oath.
But thou dost well; thou tak'st the cheapest way;
Not to own services thou canst not pay.
Boab. My patience more than pays thy service past;
But know this insolence shall be thy last.
Hence from my sight! and take it as a grace,
Thou liv'st, and art but banished from the place.
Almanz. Where'er I go, there can no exile be;
But from Almanzor's sight I banish thee:
I will not now, if thou wouldst beg me, stay;
But I will take my Almahide away.
Stay thou with all thy subjects here; but know,
We leave thy city empty when we go.
[*Takes* Almahide's *hand.*
Boab. Fall on; take; kill the traitor.
[*The Guards fall on him; he makes at the King through the midst of them, and falls upon him; they disarm him, and rescue the King.*
Almanz. —Base and poor,
Blush that thou art Almanzor's conqueror.
[Almahide *wrings her hands, then turns and veils her face.*
Farewell, my Almahide!
Life of itself will go, now thou art gone,
Like flies in winter, when they lose the sun.
[Abenamar *whispers the King a little, then speaks aloud.*
Aben. Revenge, and taken so secure a way,
Are blessings which heaven sends not every day.
Boab. I will at leisure now revenge my wrong;
And, traitor, thou shalt feel my vengeance long:
Thou shalt not die just at thy own desire,
But see my nuptials, and with rage expire.
Almanz. Thou darest not marry her while I'm in sight:
With a bent brow thy priest and thee I'll fright;
And in that scene
Which all thy hopes and wishes should content,
The thought of me shall make thee impotent.
[*He is led off by Guards.*
Boab. [*to* Almah.]. As some fair tulip, by a storm oppressed,
Shrinks up, and folds its silken arms to rest;
And, bending to the blast, all pale and dead,
Hears from within the wind sing round its head;
So, shrouded up, your beauty disappears:
Unveil, my love, and lay aside your fears.
The storm that caused your fright is passed and done.
[Almahide *unveiling, and looking round for* Almanzor.
Almah. So flowers peep out too soon, and miss the sun. [*Turning from him.*
Boab. What mystery in this strange behavior lies?
Almah. Let me for ever hide these guilty eyes
Which lighted my Almanzor to his tomb;
Or, let 'em blaze, to show me there a room.
Boab. Heaven lent their lustre for a nobler end;
A thousand torches must their light attend,
To lead you to a temple and a crown.
Why does my fairest Almahida frown?
Am I less pleasing than I was before,
Or is the insolent Almanzor more?
Almah. I justly own that I some pity have,
Not for the insolent, but for the brave.
Aben. Though to your king your duty you neglect,
Know, Almahide, I look for more respect:
And, if a parent's charge your mind can move,
Receive the blessing of a monarch's love.
Almah. Did he my freedom to his life prefer,
And shall I wed Almanzor's murderer?
No, sir; I cannot to your will submit;
Your way's too rugged for my tender feet.
Aben. You must be driven where you refuse to go;
And taught, by force, your happiness to know.
Almah. [*smiling scornfully*]. To force me, sir, is much unworthy you,
And, when you would, impossible to do.
If force could bend me, you might think, with shame,
That I debased the blood from whence I came.
My soul is soft, which you may gently lay
In your loose palm; but, when 'tis pressed to stay,
Like water, it deludes your grasp and slips away.
Boab. I find I must revoke what I decreed:

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Almanzor's death my nuptials must precede.
Love is a magic which the lover ties;
But charms still end when the magician dies.
Go; let me hear my hated rival's dead;
[*To his Guards.*
And, to convince my eyes, bring back his head.
Almah. Go on: I wish no other way to prove
That I am worthy of Almanzor's love.
We will in death, at least, united be:
I'll show you I can die as well as he.
Boab. What should I do! when equally I dread
Almanzor living and Almanzor dead!—
Yet, by your promise, you are mine alone.
Almah. How dare you claim my faith, and break your own?
Aben. This for your virtue is a weak defence:
No second vows can with your first dispense.
Yet, since the king did to Almanzor swear,
And in his death ingrateful may appear,
He ought, in justice, first to spare his life,
And then to claim your promise as his wife.
Almah. Whate'er my secret inclinations be,
To this, since honor ties me, I agree:
Yet I declare, and to the world will own,
That, far from seeking, I would shun the throne,
And with Almanzor lead a humble life:
There is a private greatness in his wife.
Boab. That little love I have, I hardly buy;
You give my rival all, while you deny:
Yet, Almahide, to let you see your power,
Your loved Almanzor shall be free this hour.
You are obeyed; but 'tis so great a grace,
That I could wish me in my rival's place.
[*Exeunt King and* Abenamar.
Almah. How blest was I before this fatal day,
When all I knew of love, was to obey!
'Twas life becalmed, without a gentle breath;
Though not so cold, yet motionless as death.
A heavy, quiet state; but love, all strife,
All rapid, is the hurricane of life.
Had love not shown me, I had never seen
An excellence beyond Boabdelin.
I had not, aiming higher, lost my rest;
But with a vulgar good been dully blest:
But, in Almanzor, having seen what's rare,
Now I have learnt too sharply to compare;
And, like a favorite quickly in disgrace,
Just know the value ere I lose the place.

To her Almanzor, *bound and guarded.*

Almanz. I see the end for which I'm hither sent, [*Looking down.*
To double, by your sight, my punishment.
There is a shame in bonds I cannot bear;
Far more than death, to meet your eyes I fear.
Almah. [*unbinding him*]. That shame of long continuance shall not be:
The king, at my entreaty, sets you free.
Almanz. The king! my wonder's greater than before;
How did he dare my freedom to restore?
He like some captive lion uses me;
He runs away before he sets me free,
And takes a sanctuary in his court:
I'll rather lose my life than thank him for 't.
Almah. If any subject for your thanks there be,
The king expects 'em not; you owe 'em me.
Our freedoms through each other's hands have passed;
You give me my revenge in winning last.
Almanz. Then fate commodiously for me has done;
To lose mine there where I would have it won.
Almah. Almanzor, you too soon will understand,
That what I win is on another's hand.
The king (who doomed you to a cruel fate)
Gave to my prayers both his revenge and hate;
But at no other price would rate your life,
Than my consent and oath to be his wife.
Almanz. Would you, to save my life, my love betray?
Here; take me; bind me; carry me away;
Kill me! I'll kill you if you disobey.
[*To the Guards.*
Almah. That absolute command your love does give,
I take, and charge you by that power to live.
Almanz. When death, the last of comforts, you refuse,
Your power, like heaven upon the damned, you use;
You force me in my being to remain,
To make me last, and keep me fresh for pain.
When all my joys are gone,
What cause can I for living longer give,
But a dull, lazy habitude to live?
Almah. Rash men, like you, and impotent of will,
Give Chance no time to turn, but urge her still;
She would repent; you push the quarrel on,
And once because she went, she must be gone.
Almanz. She shall not turn; what is it she can do,
To recompence me for the loss of you?
Almah. Heaven will reward your worth some better way:
At least, for me, you have but lost one day.
Nor is't a real loss which you deplore;

You sought a heart that was engaged before.
'Twas a swift love which took you in his way;
Flew only through your heart, but made no stay:
'Twas but a dream, where truth had not a place;
A scene of fancy, moved so swift a pace,
And shifted, that you can but think it was;
Let, then, the short vexatious vision pass.
Almanz. My joys, indeed, are dreams; but not my pain:
'Twas a swift ruin, but the marks remain.
When some fierce fire lays goodly buildings waste,
Would you conclude
There had been none, because the burning's past?
Almah. It was your fault that fire seized all your breast;
You should have blown up some to save the rest:
But 'tis, at worst, but so consumed by fire,
As cities are, that by their falls rise higher.
Build love a nobler temple in my place;
You'll find the fire has but enlarged your space.
Almanz. Love has undone me; I am grown so poor,
I sadly view the ground I had before,
But want a stock, and ne'er can build it more.
Almah. Then say what charity I can allow;
I would contribute if I knew but how.
Take friendship; or, if that too small appear,
Take love which sisters may to brothers bear.
Almanz. A sister's love! that is so palled a thing,
What pleasure can it to a lover bring?
'Tis like thin food to men in fevers spent;
Just keeps alive, but gives no nourishment.
What hopes, what fears, what transports can it move?
'Tis but the ghost of a departed love.
Almah. You, like some greedy cormorant, devour
All my whole life can give you, in an hour.
What more I can do for you is to die,
And that must follow, if you this deny.
Since I gave up my love, that you might live,
You, in refusing life, my sentence give.
Almanz. Far from my breast be such an impious thought!
Your death would lose the quiet mine had sought.
I'll live for you, in spite of misery;
But you shall grant that I had rather die.
I'll be so wretched, filled with such despair,
That you shall see to live was more to dare.
Almah. Adieu, then, O my soul's far better part!
Your image sticks so close,
That the blood follows from my rending heart.
A last farewell!
For, since a last must come, the rest are vain,
Like gasps in death, which but prolong our pain.
But, since the king is now a part of me,
Cease from henceforth to be his enemy.
Go now, for pity go! for, if you stay,
I fear I shall have something still to say.
Thus—I for ever shut you from my sight.
[*Veils.*
Almanz. Like one thrust out in a cold winter's night,
Yet shivering underneath your gate I stay;
One look—I cannot go before 'tis day.—
[*She beckons him to be gone.*
Not one—Farewell: Whate'er my sufferings be
Within, I'll speak farewell as loud as she:
I will not be outdone in constancy.—
[*She turns her back.*
Then like a dying conqueror I go;
At least I have looked last upon my foe.
I go—but if too heavily I move,
I walk encumbered with a weight of love.
Fain I would leave the thought of you behind,
But still, the more I cast you from my mind,
You dash, like water, back, when thrown against the wind. [*Exit.*
[*As he goes off, the King meets him with* Abenamar; *they stare at each other without saluting.*
Boab. With him go all my fears. A guard there wait,
And see him safe without the city gate.

To them Abdelmelech.

Now, Abdelmelech, is my brother dead?
Abdelm. The usurper to the Christian camp is fled;
Whom as Granada's lawful king they own,
And vow, by force, to seat him on the throne.
Meantime the rebels in the Albayzin rest;
Which is in Lyndaraxa's name possessed.
Boab. Haste and reduce it instantly by force.
Abdelm. First give me leave to prove a milder course.
She will, perhaps, on summons yield the place.
Boab. We cannot to your suit refuse her grace.
[*One enters hastily, and whispers* Abenamar.
Aben. How fortune persecutes this hoary head!
My Ozmyn is with Selin's daughter fled.

But he's no more my son:
My hate shall like a Zegry him pursue,
Till I take back what blood from me he drew.
Boab. Let war and vengeance be to-morrow's care;
But let us to the temple now repair.
A thousand torches make the mosque more bright:
This must be mine and Almahida's night.
Hence, ye importunate affairs of state,
You should not tyrannize on love, but wait.
Had life no love, none would for business live;
Yet still from love the largest part we give;
And must be forced, in empire's weary toil,
To live long wretched, to be pleased a while.
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE

Success, which can no more than beauty last,
Makes our sad poet mourn your favors past:
For, since without desert he got a name,
He fears to lose it now with greater shame.
Fame, like a little mistress of the town,
Is gained with ease, but then she's lost as soon:
For, as those tawdry misses, soon or late,
Jilt such as keep 'em at the highest rate;
(And oft the lacquey, or the brawny clown,
Gets what is hid in the loose-bodied gown),—
So, Fame is false to all that keep her long;
And turns up to the fop that's brisk and young.
Some wiser poet now would leave Fame first;
But elder wits are, like old lovers, cursed:
Who, when the vigor of their youth is spent,
Still grow more fond, as they grow impotent.
This, some years hence, our poet's case may prove:
But yet, he hopes, he's young enough to love.
When forty comes, if e'er he live to see
That wretched, fumbling age of poetry,
'Twill be high time to bid his Muse adieu:
Well he may please himself, but never you.
Till then, he'll do as well as he began,
And hopes you will not find him less a man.
Think him not duller for this year's delay;
He was prepared, the women were away;
And men, without their parts, can hardly play.
If they, through sickness, seldom did appear,
Pity the virgins of each theatre:
For at both houses 'twas a sickly year!
And pity us, your servants, to whose cost,
In one such sickness, nine whole months are lost.
Their stay, he fears, has ruined what he writ:
Long waiting both disables love and wit.
They thought they gave him leisure to do well;
But, when they forced him to attend, he fell!
Yet, though he much has failed, he begs, to-day,
You will excuse his unperforming play:
Weakness sometimes great passion does express;
He had pleased better, had he loved you less.

ALL FOR LOVE

The Preface and Prologue to Dryden's *All for Love* (1678) proclaim the passing of his period of heroic plays. The versatile leader of Restoration drama now "fights unarmed without his rhyme." "His hero bates of his mettle and scarce rants at all." In his style he professes to imitate the divine Shakspere. Such imitations were now common enough. Shadwell in *Timon of Athens*, Ravencroft in *Titus Andronicus*, Tate in *King Lear*, Lacy in his version of *The Shrew, Sauny the Scot*, had catered to changing taste of changing time. Dryden himself, eleven years before (1667), had entered the circle of Shakspere's magic in company with Sir William Davenant, producing thus the abortive adaptation of *The Tempest* with its new spawns of Caliban's sister, Miranda's male counterpart and another and feminine Ariel. During these eleven years Dryden's already large reverence for the great Elizabethan had increased to but little this side idolatry. In *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, printed in 1668, he mingles with high commendation free criticism of Shakspere's wit and language. In his *Defense of the Epilogue* which accompanied *The Conquest of Granada* (1672), he finds on every page of Shakspere and Fletcher some solecism of speech or some notorious flaw of sense and recognizes in the greater of the two "a carelessness and a lethargy of thought for whole scenes together." Now in the *All for Love* Preface he marvels that "much of his language remains so pure." A year later (1679) he again pays the master the tribute of imitation in his new-modelling of *Troilus and Cressida*, but this alteration seems sheer anticlimax after the splendid triumph of our present play.

The ingenious application of "pseudo-classic dramatic rules to the familiar subject of *Antony and Cleopatra*" (Noyes) was to Dryden a labor of love. "I never writ anything for myself but *Antony and Cleopatra*." The purpose of his version, aptly called *All for Love*, is clearly defined in the Preface: "I have endeavored in this play to follow the practice of the ancients, who, as Mr. Rymer has judiciously observed, are and ought to be our masters." "The fabric of the play is regular enough, as to the inferior parts of it; and the unities of time, place, and action more exactly observed than perhaps the English theatre requires. Particularly the action is so much one that it is the only of the kind without episode or underplot; every scene in the tragedy conducing to the main design, and every act concluding with a turn of it."

It is, therefore, in Dryden's classical concern for the unities of place,

time, and action, that he first invites contrast with Shakspere, whom he regards as "deficient in the mechanic beauties of plot." Shakspere's changes of scene—possible only on the simple symbolic platform of his time and on the complex realistic stage of ours—fall little short of forty. The background is almost as varied as the Roman Empire itself—Rome, Alexandria, Messenum, Athens, Pompey's galley on the high seas, the plains of Syria, the promontory of Actium. Dryden rigidly limits the action to the Egyptian capital—the temple of Isis, and, perhaps, the palace of Cleopatra. Shakspere's play covers ten years of history, Dryden's a single crowded day. If, as has been objected, the Restoration dramatist runs counter to both history and probability in thus condensing events far too spacious for his narrow time-compass, he follows in such concentration much illustrious precedent—witness the *Agamemnon*. The action, too, has nought of the epic breadth of Shakspere's imperial theme, but is limited to the crisis in the story of the royal lovers. *Antony and Cleopatra* is the all-embracing picture of an age in which the empire of the world was cast into the balance. *All for Love* obscures this world-struggle and emphasizes the merely personal aspects of the oft-told tale. Thus the most comprehensive of Shakspere's later plots is everywhere narrowed in the interest of classical order and restraint.

To speak more definitely of the technique of Dryden's orderly drama: He certainly owes nothing to Appian and Dio Cassius, of whom in his Preface he makes misleading mention, and, save in Cleopatra's death-scene, but little directly to Plutarch. His first four acts are largely of his own making, and it is only in his fifth that Shaksperean allusions are plentiful. The conclusion follows the model rather closely. The finest passage in the play—and here the author and his editors are in entire accord—is the scene in the first act between Antony and Ventidius with its faraway reminiscence of Brutus and Cassius at half-sword parley. And yet it is here that we encounter the most inapt of all Dryden's liftings, when, for the sake of a few melodious lines, he metamorphoses Antony into Jaques, the malcontent of Arden. Something of Shakspere's power is caught in the noble scene in which Cleopatra dons crown and jewels before her death. But the incident which has occasioned largest debate is the meeting between Octavia and Cleopatra. Some deem it a regular scolding match, "two pea-hens in a passion," and declare that "Shakspere would never have opposed the captivating, brilliant and meretricious Cleopatra to the noble and chaste Octavia." On the other hand Furness praises the dignity of the scene and Churton Collins regards it as perhaps finer than anything which the stage had seen since Massinger. Certainly, a comparison between this scene and the "heroic" treatment of a very similar situation in *The Rival Queens* by Nat Lee invites only admiration for Dryden's self-restraint. In the author's own discussion of the mooted passage, he places himself frankly on the side of illicit love. "I had not enough considered," he writes in his Preface, "that the compassion she [Octavia] moved to herself and children was

destructive to that which I reserved for Antony and Cleopatra, whose mutual love being founded upon vice must lessen the favor of the audience to them when virtue and innocence were oppressed by it." Here in art as in ethics the caterer to depraved Restoration palates is guilty of as great an error as Keats in his *Lamia*. The moral topsey-turveydom of the drama is apparent not in this single scene in which our sympathies are unwittingly diverted to the side of right, but in all the others in which our bias leans rather to the side of wrong. Not undeserved by Dryden was Lowell's censure: "He who was of a stature to snatch the torch of life that flashes from lifted hand to hand along the generations over the heads of inferior men chose rather to be a link-boy to the stews."

With the severest criticism directed against *All for Love* that the struggle is over as Antony is already lost, and that hence the action is narrative rather than dramatic the present editors cannot agree. The struggle is not over. Antony's better angel, Ventidius, has power over him yet, and at the end of the first act wins him for a while from his allegiance to Cleopatra. Then the Queen, through the force of her charms, wins him back. But her final victory is not yet gained, for the hero's wife and children so appeal to his heart that they lose him at last only through a strategic mistake, which, by inflaming his jealousy, fans his passion for the Egyptian. Thus throughout the drama—and the theme is essentially dramatic—the forces of good and of ill wage doubtful battle for possession of the hero. All this is surely not "episodic," but shows the highest constructive skill. Until the final act all is not lost.

Chiefly in the persons of the drama is Dryden's inferiority to his model palpably revealed. The limitation of time to the protagonists' last day, in accord with the conventional compass of pseudo-classic tragedy, is responsible for the changed conception of Antony:—now no longer a Colossus astride the Roman world, but a bankrupt of fortune and honor, penned in a corner; no more an imperial-minded captain swayed by convulsive passions that shake the wide earth, but a broken voluptuary, a "sighing swain of Arcadia," a victim struggling in the snare of sentimental infatuation; not an eager-hearted Antony, splendid master of opportunity, but an Antony in the fell clutch of circumstance, whose wavering spirit yields to weakness in its final hour and hence forfeits all. And Cleopatra—"every man's Cleopatra"? Every man's but Shakspere's! What age and custom could not inflict upon the rare Egyptian has been wrought by Dryden at the dictation of contemporary "heroic" convention. Her infinite variety is staled in response to critic Rymer's preposterous decree that "Tragedy cannot represent a woman, without modesty as natural and essential to her." And so "the serpent of old Nile" suffers change to

> "A silly, harmless, household dove,
> Fond without art, and kind without deceit."

Of all the clashing elements that compose that "wonderful piece of work," charm, cruelty, caprice, wit, wiles, fierce fickleness, and tender faith, only the last abides in the stock heroine of Restoration drama, the fond maiden who vaunts a whole life's truth. "Cleopatra is wretched," says Churton Collins bluntly of Dryden's ideal queen; and the critics dazzled by her brilliant prototype concur.

Sir Walter Scott, always very kind to our drama, declares that "the inferior characters are better supported in Dryden than in Shakspere." A just claim perhaps, as the earlier tragedy offers no mates to Ventidius, Alexas, and Dolabella. But Scott's praise of the omission of "low buffoonery as in Enobarbus" awakes no echo, as that worldly wise cynic in his double rôle of foil and chorus is such a favorite with many that nothing in Dryden compensates us for his absence. That the later Octavia is "cold, selfish, and unamiable" few will deny who view her only as Cleopatra's rival. In the more gracious rôle of wife and mother, she is tender and forgiving.

A word or two now of Dryden's style. The noble blank verse of *All for Love* confesses a double influence: the inspiration of the organic meter of Shakspere's ripest period, when meaning and movement are in perfect harmony; and the restraint imposed upon Dryden by fourteen years of rime. Hence springs a rhythm full free and yet severe, contrasting loftily with the loose unrimed verse of his own comedies and the blank iambics of the weaker romantic dramatists. Dryden's language in his greatest play is signally energetic and sonorous—revealing a rotundity of utterance that is never more splendidly effective than in the opening speeches of Serapion. Here and often elsewhere we are reminded of Gray's description of Dryden's ethereal coursers,—"with necks in thunder clothed and long-resounding pace." Sometimes significant phrasings smack of invasions into Shakspere's plays other than the immediate model. "I hope I may affirm and without vanity, that by imitating him, I have excelled myself throughout the play."

Perhaps the chief distinction of *All for Love* is its illustrious stage-history. It crowded from the boards its nobler original for more than a century. During this period Antony was presented by such actors as Hart, Betterton, Booth, and Kemble, and Cleopatra by Mrs. Barry, Nance Oldfield, Peg Woffington, and Mrs. Siddons. Dryden's drama was played in Philadelphia in 1767 and in New York in 1768. Since its revival at Bath by Conway in 1818, *All for Love* has disappeared from the stage.

ALL FOR LOVE

OR

THE WORLD WELL LOST

A Tragedy

PROLOGUE

What flocks of critics hover here to-day,
As vultures wait on armies for their prey,
All gaping for the carcase of a play!
With croaking notes they bode some dire event,
And follow dying poets by the scent.
Ours gives himself for gone; y' have watched your time:
He fights this day unarmed,—without his rhyme;—
And brings a tale which often has been told;
As sad as Dido's; and almost as old.
His hero, whom you wits his bully call,
Bates of his mettle, and scarce rants at all:
He's somewhat lewd; but a well-meaning mind;
Weeps much; fights little; but is wondrous kind.
In short, a pattern, and companion fit,
For all the keeping Tonies of the pit.
I could name more: a wife, and mistress too;
Both (to be plain) too good for most of you:
The wife well-natured, and the mistress true.
Now, poets, if your fame has been his care,
Allow him all the candor you can spare.
A brave man scorns to quarrel once a-day;
Like Hectors in at every petty fray.
Let those find fault whose wit's so very small,
They've need to show that they can think at all;
Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls, must dive below.
Fops may have leave to level all they can;
As pigmies would be glad to lop a man.
Half-wits are fleas; so little and so light,
We scarce could know they live, but that they bite.
But, as the rich, when tired with daily feasts,
For change, become their next poor tenant's guests;

Drink hearty draughts of ale from plain brown bowls,
And snatch the homely rasher from the coals:
So you, retiring from much better cheer,
For once, may venture to do penance here.
And since that plenteous autumn now is past,
Whose grapes and peaches have indulged your taste,
Take in good part, from our poor poet's board,
Such rivelled fruits as winter can afford.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Mark Antony.
Ventidius, *his General.*
Dolabella, *his Friend.*
Alexas, *the Queen's Eunuch.*
Serapion, *Priest of Isis.*
Myris, *another Priest.*

Servants to Antony.
Cleopatra, *Queen of Egypt.*
Octavia, *Antony's Wife.*
Charmion, Iras, } *Cleopatra's Maids.*
Antony's two little Daughters.

Scene.—Alexandria.

ACT I

Scene I.—*The Temple of Isis.*

Enter Serapion, Myris, *Priests of Isis.*

Serap. **Portents and prodigies are grown so frequent,**
That they have lost their name. Our fruitful Nile
Flowed ere the wonted season, with a torrent
So unexpected, and so wondrous fierce,
That the wild deluge overtook the haste
Even of the hinds that watched it; men and beasts
Were borne above the tops of trees, that grew
On the utmost margin of the water-mark.
Then, with so swift an ebb the flood drove backward,
It slipt from underneath the scaly herd:
Here monstrous phocæ panted on the shore;
Forsaken dolphins there with their broad tails,
Lay lashing the departing waves: hard by 'em,
Sea horses floundering in the slimy mud,
Tossed up their heads, and dashed the ooze about 'em.

Enter Alexas *behind them.*

Myr. **Avert these omens, Heaven!**
Serap. **Last night, between the hours of twelve and one,**
In a lone aisle of the temple while I walked,
A whirlwind rose, that, with a violent blast,
Shook all the dome: the doors around me clapt;
The iron wicket, that defends the vault,
Where the long race of Ptolemies is laid,
Burst open, and disclosed the mighty dead.
From out each monument, in order placed,
An armed ghost starts up: the boy-king last
Reared his inglorious head. A peal of groans
Then followed, and a lamentable voice
Cried, "Egypt is no more!" My blood ran back,
My shaking knees against each other knocked;
On the cold pavement down I fell entranced,
And so unfinished left the horrid scene.
Alex. [*showing himself*]. **And dreamed you this? or did invent the story,**
To frighten our Egyptian boys withal,
And train 'em up, betimes, in fear of priesthood?
Serap. **My lord, I saw you not,**
Nor meant my words should reach your ears; but what
I uttered was most true.
Alex. **A foolish dream,**
Bred from the fumes of indigested feasts,
And holy luxury.
Serap. **I know my duty:**
This goes no farther.
Alex. **'Tis not fit it should;**
Nor would the times now bear it, were it true.
All southern, from yon hills, the Roman camp
Hangs o'er us black and threatening, like a storm
Just breaking on our heads.
Serap. **Our faint Egyptians pray for Antony;**

But in their servile hearts they own Octavius.
Myr. Why then does Antony dream out his hours,
And tempts not fortune for a noble day,
Which might redeem what Actium lost?
Alex. He thinks 'tis past recovery.
Serap. Yet the foe
Seems not to press the siege.
Alex. Oh, there's the wonder.
Mæcenas and Agrippa, who can most
With Cæsar, are his foes. His wife Octavia,
Driven from his house, solicits her revenge;
And Dolabella, who was once his friend,
Upon some private grudge, now seeks his ruin:
Yet still war seems on either side to sleep.
Serap. 'Tis strange that Antony, for some days past,
Has not beheld the face of Cleopatra;
But here, in Isis' temple, lives retired,
And makes his heart a prey to black despair.
Alex. 'Tis true; and we much fear he hopes by absence
To cure his mind of love.
Serap. If he be vanquished,
Or make his peace, Egypt is doomed to be
A Roman province; and our plenteous harvests
Must then redeem the scarceness of their soil.
While Antony stood firm, our Alexandria
Rivalled proud Rome (dominion's other seat),
And Fortune striding, like a vast Colossus,
Could fix an equal foot of empire here.
Alex. Had I my wish, these tyrants of all nature,
Who lord it o'er mankind, should perish,—perish,
Each by the other's sword; but, since our will
Is lamely followed by our power, we must
Depend on one; with him to rise or fall.
Serap. How stands the queen affected?
Alex. O, she dotes,
She dotes, Serapion, on this vanquished man,
And winds herself about his mighty ruins;
Whom would she yet forsake, yet yield him up,
This hunted prey, to his pursuer's hands,
She might preserve us all; but 'tis in vain—
This changes my designs, this blasts my counsels,
And makes me use all means to keep him here,
Whom I could wish divided from her arms.
Far as the earth's deep centre. Well, you know
The state of things; no more of your ill omens
And black prognostics; labor to confirm
The people's hearts.

Enter Ventidius, *talking aside with a Gentleman of* Antony's.

Serap. These Romans will o'erhear us.
But, who's that stranger? By his warlike port,
His fierce demeanor, and erected look,
He's of no vulgar note.
Alex. Oh 'tis Ventidius,
Our emperor's great lieutenant in the East,
Who first showed Rome that Parthia could be conquered.
When Antony returned from Syria last,
He left this man to guard the Roman frontiers.
Serap. You seem to know him well.
Alex. Too well. I saw him at Cilicia first,
When Cleopatra there met Antony:
A mortal foe he was to us, and Egypt.
But,—let me witness to the worth I hate,—
A braver Roman never drew a sword;
Firm to his prince, but as a friend, not slave.
He ne'er was of his pleasures; but presides
O'er all his cooler hours, and morning counsels:
In short the plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue,
Of an old true-stampt Roman lives in him.
His coming bodes I know not what of ill
To our affairs. Withdraw, to mark him better;
And I'll acquaint you why I sought you here,
And what's our present work.

[*They withdraw to a corner of the stage; and* Ventidius, *with the other, comes forward to the front.*

Vent. Not see him, say you?
I say, I must, and will.
Gent. He has commanded,
On pain of death, none should approach his presence.
Vent. I bring him news will raise his drooping spirits,
Give him new life.
Gent. He sees not Cleopatra.
Vent. Would he had never seen her!
Gent. He eats not, drinks not, sleeps not, has no use
Of anything, but thought; or, if he talks,
'Tis to himself, and then 'tis perfect raving:
Then he defies the world, and bids it pass;
Sometimes he gnaws his lip, and curses loud
The boy Octavius; then he draws his mouth
Into a scornful smile, and cries, "Take all,
The world's not worth my care."
Vent. Just, just his nature.
Virtue's his path; but sometimes 'tis too narrow
For his vast soul; and then he starts out wide,
And bounds into a vice, that bears him far
From his first course, and plunges him in ills:

But, when his danger makes him find his fault,
Quick to observe, and full of sharp remorse,
He censures eagerly his own misdeeds,
Judging himself with malice to himself,
And not forgiving what as man he did,
Because his other parts are more than man.
He must not thus be lost.

[ALEXAS *and the Priests come forward.*

Alex. You have your full instructions, now advance;
Proclaim your orders loudly.

Serap. Romans, Egyptians, hear the queen's command.
Thus Cleopatra bids: "Let labor cease;
To pomp and triumphs give this happy day,
That gave the world a lord: 'tis Antony's."
Live, Antony; and Cleopatra live!
Be this the general voice sent up to heaven,
And every public place repeat this echo.

Vent. [*aside*]. Fine pageantry!

Serap. Set out before your doors
The images of all your sleeping fathers,
With laurels crowned; with laurels wreathe your posts,
And strew with flowers the pavement; let the priests
Do present sacrifice; pour out the wine,
And call the gods to join with you in gladness.

Vent. Curse on the tongue that bids this general joy!
Can they be friends of Antony, who revel
When Antony's in danger? Hide, for shame,
You Romans, your great grandsires' images,
For fear their souls should animate their marbles,
To blush at their degenerate progeny.

Alex. A love, which knows no bounds, to Antony,
Would mark the day with honors, when all heaven
Labored for him, when each propitious star
Stood wakeful in his orb, to watch that hour,
And shed his better influence. Her own birthday
Our queen neglected like a vulgar fate,
That passed obscurely by.

Vent. Would it had slept,
Divided far from his; till some remote
And future age had called it out, to ruin
Some other prince, not him!

Alex. Your emperor,
Though grown unkind, would be more gentle, than
To upbraid my queen for loving him too well.

Vent. Does the mute sacrifice upbraid the priest?
He knows him not his executioner.
Oh, she has decked his ruin with her love,
Led him in golden bands to gaudy slaughter.
And made perdition pleasing; she has left him
The blank of what he was.
I tell thee, eunuch, she has quite unmanned him.
Can any Roman see, and know him now,
Thus altered from the lord of half mankind,
Unbent, unsinewed, made a woman's toy,
Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honors,
And crampt within a corner of the world?
O Antony!
Thou bravest soldier, and thou best of friends!
Bounteous as nature; next to nature's God!
Couldst thou but make new worlds, so wouldst thou give 'em,
As bounty were thy being: rough in battle,
As the first Romans when they went to war;
Yet, after victory, more pitiful
Than all their praying virgins left at home!

Alex. Would you could add, to those more shining virtues,
His truth to her who loves him.

Vent. Would I could not!
But wherefore waste I precious hours with thee!
Thou art her darling mischief, her chief engine,
Antony's other fate. Go, tell thy queen,
Ventidius is arrived, to end her charms.
Let your Egyptian timbrels play alone,
Nor mix effeminate sounds with Roman trumpets.
You dare not fight for Antony; go pray
And keep your cowards' holiday in temples.

[*Exeunt* ALEXAS, SERAPION.

Enter a second Gentleman of M. ANTONY.

2 Gent. The emperor approaches, and commands,
On pain of death, that none presume to stay.

1 Gent. I dare not disobey him.

[*Going out with the other.*

Vent. Well, I dare.
But I'll observe him first unseen, and find
Which way his humor drives: the rest I'll venture.

[*Withdraws.*

Enter ANTONY, *walking with a disturbed motion before he speaks.*

Ant. They tell me, 'tis my birthday, and I'll keep it
With double pomp of sadness.
'Tis what the day deserves, which gave me breath.
Why was I raised the meteor of the world,
Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travelled,
Till all my fires were spent; and then cast downward,
To be trod out by Cæsar?

Vent. [*aside*]. On my soul,
'Tis mournful, wondrous mournful!

Ant. Count thy gains.
Now, Antony, wouldst thou be born for this?

Glutton of fortune, thy devouring youth
Has starved thy wanting age.
Vent. [*aside*]. How sorrow shakes him!
So, now the tempest tears him up by the roots,
And on the ground extends the noble ruin.
Ant. [*having thrown himself down*]. Lie there, thou shadow of an emperor;
The place thou pressest on thy mother earth
Is all thy empire now: now it contains thee;
Some few days hence, and then 'twill be too large,
When thou'rt contracted in thy narrow urn,
Shrunk to a few cold ashes; then Octavia
(For Cleopatra will not live to see it),
Octavia then will have thee all her own,
And bear thee in her widowed hand to Cæsar;
Cæsar will weep, the crocodile will weep,
To see his rival of the universe
Lie still and peaceful there. I'll think no more on't.
Give me some music: look that it be sad:
I'll soothe my melancholy, till I swell,
And burst myself with sighing.—
[*Soft music.*
'Tis somewhat to my humor: stay, I fancy
I'm now turned wild, a commoner of nature,
Of all forsaken, and forsaking all;
Live in a shady forest's sylvan scene,
Stretched at my length beneath some blasted oak,
I lean my head upon the mossy bark,
And look just of a piece as I grew from it;
My uncombed locks, matted like mistletoe,
Hang o'er my hoary face; a murm'ring brook
Runs at my foot.
Vent. Methinks I fancy
Myself there too.
Ant. The herd come jumping by me,
And, fearless, quench their thirst, while I look on,
And take me for their fellow-citizen.
More of this image, more; it lulls my thoughts. [*Soft music again.*
Vent. I must disturb him; I can hold no longer. [*Stands before him.*
Ant. [*starting up*]. Art thou Ventidius?
Vent. Are you Antony?
I'm liker what I was, than you to him
I left you last.
Ant. I'm angry.
Vent. So am I.
Ant. I would be private: leave me.
Vent. Sir, I love you,
And therefore will not leave you.
Ant. Will not leave me!
Where have you learnt that answer? Who am I?
Vent. My emperor; the man I love next heaven;
If I said more, I think 'twere scarce a sin;
You're all that's good, and god-like.
Ant. All that's wretched.
You will not leave me then?
Vent. 'Twas too presuming
To say I would not; but I dare not leave you:
And, 'tis unkind in you to chide me hence
So soon, when I so far have come to see you.
Ant. Now thou hast seen me, art thou satisfied?
For, if a friend, thou hast beheld enough;
And, if a foe, too much.
Vent. [*weeping*]. Look, emperor, this is no common dew.
I have not wept this forty year; but now
My mother comes afresh into my eyes;
I cannot help her softness.
Ant. By heaven, he weeps! poor good old man, he weeps!
The big round drops course one another down
The furrows of his cheeks. Stop 'em, Ventidius,
Or I shall blush to death; they set my shame,
That caused 'em, full before me.
Vent. I'll do my best.
Ant. Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends:
See, I have caught it too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine.—Nay, father!
Vent. Emperor.
Ant. Emperor! Why, that's the style of victory;
The conquering soldier, red with unfelt wounds,
Salutes his general so: but never more
Shall that sound reach my ears.
Vent. I warrant you.
Ant. Actium, Actium! Oh!——
Vent. It sits too near you.
Ant. Here, here it lies; a lump of lead by day,
And, in my short, distracted, nightly slumbers,
The hag that rides my dreams.——
Vent. Out with it; give it vent.
Ant. Urge not my shame.
I lost a battle,——
Vent. So has Julius done.
Ant. Thou favor'st me, and speak'st not half thou think'st;
For Julius fought it out, and lost it fairly:
But Antony——
Vent. Nay, stop not.
Ant. Antony,—
Well, thou wilt have it,—like a coward, fled,
Fled while his soldiers fought; fled first, Ventidius.
Thou long'st to curse me, and I give thee leave.
I know thou cam'st prepared to rail.
Vent. I did.

Ant. I'll help thee.—I have been a man, Ventidius.
Vent. Yes, and a brave one; but——
Ant. I know thy meaning.
But I have lost my reason, have disgraced
The name of soldier, with inglorious ease.
In the full vintage of my flowing honors,
Sat still, and saw it prest by other hands.
Fortune came smiling to my youth, and wooed it,
And purple greatness met my ripened years.
When first I came to empire, I was borne
On tides of people, crowding to my triumphs;
The wish of nations, and the willing world
Received me as its pledge of future peace;
I was so great, so happy, so beloved,
Fate could not ruin me; till I took pains,
And worked against my fortune, chid her from me,
And turned her loose; yet still she came again.
My careless days, and my luxurious nights,
At length have wearied her, and now she's gone,
Gone, gone, divorced for ever. Help me, soldier,
To curse this madman, this industrious fool,
Who labored to be wretched: pr'ythee, curse me.
Vent. No.
Ant. Why?
Vent. You are too sensible already
Of what you've done, too conscious of your failings;
And, like a scorpion, whipt by others first
To fury, sting yourself in mad revenge.
I would bring balm, and pour it in your wounds,
Cure your distempered mind, and heal your fortunes.
Ant. I know thou would'st.
Vent. I will.
Ant. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Vent. You laugh.
Ant. I do, to see officious love
Give cordials to the dead.
Vent. You would be lost, then?
Ant. I am.
Vent. I say you are not. Try your fortune.
Ant. I have, to the utmost. Dost thou think me desperate,
Without just cause? No, when I found all lost
Beyond repair, I hid me from the world,
And learnt to scorn it here; which now I do
So heartily, I think it is not worth
The cost of keeping.
Vent. Cæsar thinks not so;
He'll thank you for the gift he could not take.
You would be killed like Tully, would you? Do,
Hold out your throat to Cæsar, and die tamely.
Ant. No, I can kill myself; and so resolve.
Vent. I can die with you too, when time shall serve;
But fortune calls upon us now to live,
To fight, to conquer.
Ant. Sure thou dream'st, Ventidius.
Vent. No; 'tis you dream; you sleep away your hours
In desperate sloth, miscalled philosophy.
Up, up, for honor's sake; twelve legions wait you,
And long to call you chief; by painful journeys
I led 'em, patient both of heat and hunger,
Down from the Parthian marches to the Nile.
'Twill do you good to see their sunburnt faces,
Their scarred cheeks, and chopt hands; there's virtue in 'em.
They'll sell those mangled limbs at dearer rates
Than yon trim bands can buy.
Ant. Where left you them?
Vent. I said in Lower Syria.
Ant. Bring 'em hither;
There may be life in these.
Vent. They will not come.
Ant. Why didst thou mock my hopes with promised aids,
To double my despair? They're mutinous.
Vent. Most firm and loyal.
Ant. Yet they will not march
To succor me. O trifler!
Vent. They petition
You would make haste to head them.
Ant. I'm besieged.
Vent. There's but one way shut up: how came I hither?
Ant. I will not stir.
Vent. They would perhaps desire
A better reason.
Ant. I have never used
My soldiers to demand a reason of
My actions. Why did they refuse to march?
Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Ant. What was't they said?
Vent. They said they would not fight for Cleopatra.
Why should they fight indeed, to make her conquer,
And make you more a slave? to gain you kingdoms,
Which, for a kiss, at your next midnight feast,
You'll sell to her? Then she new-names her jewels,
And calls this diamond such or such a tax;
Each pendant in her ear shall be a province.
Ant. Ventidius, I allow your tongue free license
On all my other faults; but, on your life,

No word of Cleopatra; she deserves
More worlds than I can lose.
Vent. Behold, you Powers,
To whom you have intrusted humankind!
See Europe, Afric, Asia, put in balance,
And all weighed down by one light, worthless woman!
I think the gods are Antonies, and give,
Like prodigals, this nether world away
To none but wasteful hands.
Ant. You grow presumptuous.
Vent. I take the privilege of plain love to speak.
Ant. Plain love! plain arrogance, plain insolence!
Thy men are cowards; thou, an envious traitor;
Who, under seeming honesty, hast vented
The burden of thy rank, o'erflowing gall.
O that thou wert my equal; great in arms
As the first Cæsar was, that I might kill thee
Without a stain to honor!
Vent. You may kill me;
You have done more already,—called me traitor.
Ant. Art thou not one?
Vent. For showing you yourself,
Which none else durst have done? but had I been
That name, which I disdain to speak again,
I needed not have sought your abject fortunes,
Come to partake your fate, to die with you.
What hindered me to have led my conquering eagles
To fill Octavius' bands? I could have been
A traitor then, a glorious, happy traitor,
And not have been so called.
Ant. Forgive me, soldier;
I've been too passionate.
Vent. You thought me false;
Thought my old age betrayed you. Kill me, sir,
Pray, kill me; yet you need not, your unkindness
Has left your sword no work.
Ant. I did not think so;
I said it in my rage: pr'ythee, forgive me.
Why didst thou tempt my anger, by discovery
Of what I would not hear?
Vent. No prince but you
Could merit that sincerity I used,
Nor durst another man have ventured it;
But you, ere love misled your wandering eyes,
Were sure the chief and best of human race,
Framed in the very pride and boast of nature;
So perfect, that the gods, who formed you, wondered
At their own skill, and cried, "A lucky hit
Has mended our design." Their envy hindered,
Else you had been immortal, and a pattern,
When Heaven would work for ostentation sake
To copy out again.
Ant. But Cleopatra—
Go on; for I can bear it now.
Vent. No more.
Ant. Thou dar'st not trust my passion, but thou may'st;
Thou only lov'st, the rest have flattered me.
Vent. Heaven's blessing on your heart for that kind word!
May I believe you love me? Speak again.
Ant. Indeed I do. Speak this, and this, and this. [*Hugging him.*
Thy praises were unjust; but, I'll deserve 'em,
And yet mend all. Do with me what thou wilt;
Lead me to victory! thou know'st the way.
Vent. And, will you leave this——
Ant. Pr'ythee, do not curse her,
And I will leave her; though, Heaven knows, I love
Beyond life, conquest, empire, all but honor;
But I will leave her.
Vent. That's my royal master;
And, shall we fight?
Ant. I warrant thee, old soldier,
Thou shalt behold me once again in iron;
And at the head of our old troops, that beat
The Parthians, cry aloud, "Come, follow me!"
Vent. Oh, now I hear my emperor! in that word
Octavius fell. Gods, let me see that day,
And, if I have ten years behind, take all:
I'll thank you for the exchange.
Ant. O Cleopatra!
Vent. Again?
Ant. I've done: In that last sigh she went.
Cæsar shall know what 'tis to force a lover
From all he holds most dear.
Vent. Methinks, you breathe
Another soul: your looks are more divine;
You speak a hero, and you move a god.
Ant. Oh, thou hast fired me: my soul's up in arms,
And mans each part about me. Once again,
That noble eagerness of fight has seized me;
That eagerness with which I darted upward
To Cassius' camp: in vain the steepy hill
Opposed my way; in vain a war of spears
Sung round my head, and planted on my shield;
I won the trenches, while my foremost men
Lagged on the plain below.
Vent. Ye gods, ye gods,
For such another honor!
Ant. Come on, my soldier!

Our hearts and arms are still the same: I long
Once more to meet our foes; that thou and I,
Like Time and Death, marching before our troops,
May taste fate to 'em; mow 'em out a passage,
And, entering where the foremost squadrons yield,
Begin the noble harvest of the field.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

Enter Cleopatra, Iras, *and* Alexas.

Cleo. What shall I do, or whither shall I turn?
Ventidius has o'ercome, and he will go.
Alex. He goes to fight for you.
Cleo. Then he would see me, ere he went to fight:
Flatter me not; if once he goes, he's lost,
And all my hopes destroyed.
Alex. Does this weak passion
Become a mighty queen?
Cleo. I am no queen:
Is this to be a queen, to be besieged
By yon insulting Roman, and to wait
Each hour the victor's chain? These ills are small:
For Antony is lost, and I can mourn
For nothing else but him. Now come, Octavius,
I have no more to lose! prepare thy bands;
I'm fit to be a captive; Antony
Has taught my mind the fortune of a slave.
Iras. Call reason to assist you.
Cleo. I have none,
And none would have; my love's a noble madness,
Which shows the cause deserved it. Moderate sorrow
Fits vulgar love, and for a vulgar man:
But I have loved with such transcendent passion,
I soared, at first, quite out of reason's view,
And now am lost above it. No, I'm proud
'Tis thus: would Antony could see me now!
Think you he would not sigh, though he must leave me?
Sure he would sigh; for he is noble-natured,
And bears a tender heart: I know him well.
Ah, no, I know him not; I knew him once,
But now 'tis past.
Iras. Let it be past with you:
Forget him, madam.
Cleo. Never, never, Iras.
He once was mine; and once, though now 'tis gone,
Leaves a faint image of possession still.
Alex. Think him inconstant, cruel, and ungrateful.
Cleo. I cannot: if I could, those thoughts were vain.
Faithless, ungrateful, cruel, though he be,
I still must love him.

Enter Charmion.

Now, what news, my Charmion?
Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?
Am I to live, or die?—nay, do I live?
Or am I dead? for when he gave his answer,
Fate took the word, and then I lived or died.
Char. I found him, madam——
Cleo. A long speech preparing?
If thou bring'st comfort, haste, and give it me,
For never was more need.
Iras. I know he loves you.
Cleo. Had he been kind, her eyes had told me so,
Before her tongue could speak it; now she studies,
To soften what he said; but give me death,
Just as he sent it, Charmion, undisguised,
And in the words he spoke.
Char. I found him, then,
Encompassed round, I think, with iron statues;
So mute, so motionless his soldiers stood,
While awfully he cast his eyes about,
And every leader's hopes or fears surveyed;
Methought he looked resolved, and yet not pleased.
When he beheld me struggling in the crowd,
He blushed, and bade make way.
Alex. There's comfort yet.
Char. Ventidius fixed his eyes upon my passage
Severely, as he meant to frown me back,
And sullenly gave place; I told my message,
Just as you gave it, broken and disordered;
I numbered in it all your sighs and tears,
And while I moved your pitiful request,
That you but only begged a last farewell,
He fetched an inward groan; and every time
I named you, sighed, as if his heart were breaking,
But, shunned my eyes, and guiltily looked down;
He seemed not now that awful Antony,
Who shook an armed assembly with his nod;
But, making show as he would rub his eyes,
Disguised and blotted out a falling tear.
Cleo. Did he then weep? And was I worth a tear?
If what thou hast to say be not as pleasing,
Tell me no more, but let me die contented.
Char. He bid me say,—he knew himself so well,
He could deny you nothing, if he saw you;
And therefore——
Cleo. Thou wouldst say, he would not see me?

Char. And therefore begged you not to use a power,
Which he could ill resist; yet he should ever
Respect you, as he ought.
Cleo. Is that a word
For Antony to use to Cleopatra?
O that faint word, *respect!* how I disdain it!
Disdain myself, for loving after it!
He should have kept that word for cold Octavia.
Respect is for a wife; am I that thing,
That dull, insipid lump, without desires,
And without power to give 'em?
Alex. You misjudge;
You see through love, and that deludes your sight;
As, what is straight, seems crooked through the water;
But I, who bear my reason undisturbed,
Can see this Antony, this dreaded man,
A fearful slave, who fain would turn away,
And shuns his master's eyes: if you pursue him,
My life on't, he still drags a chain along.
That needs must clog his flight.
Cleo. Could I believe thee!—
Alex. By every circumstance I know he loves.
True, he's hard prest, by interest and by honor;
Yet he but doubts, and parleys, and casts out
Many a long look for succor.
Cleo. He sends word,
He fears to see my face.
Alex. And would you more?
He shows his weakness who declines the combat,
And you must urge your fortune. Could he speak
More plainly? To my ears, the message sounds—
"Come to my rescue, Cleopatra, come;
Come, free me from Ventidius; from my tyrant:
See me, and give me a pretence to leave him!—"
I hear his trumpets. This way he must pass.
Please you, retire a while; I'll work him first,
That he may bend more easy.
Cleo. You shall rule me;
But all, I fear, in vain.
[*Exit with* Charmion *and* Iras.
Alex. I fear so too;
Though I concealed my thoughts, to make her bold;
But 'tis our utmost means, and fate befriend it! [*Withdraws.*

[*Enter Lictors with Fasces; one bearing the Eagle; then enter* Antony *with* Ventidius, *followed by other Commanders.*

Ant. Octavius is the minion of blind chance,
But holds from virtue nothing.
Vent. Has he courage?
Ant. But just enough to season him from coward.
Oh, 'tis the coldest youth upon a charge,
The most deliberate fighter! if he ventures
(As in Illyria once, they say, he did,
To storm a town), 'tis when he cannot choose;
When all the world have fixt their eyes upon him;
And then he lives on that for seven years after;
But, at a close revenge he never fails.
Vent. I heard you challenged him.
Ant. I did, Ventidius.
What think'st thou was his answer? 'Twas so tame!
He said, he had more ways than one to die;
I had not.
Vent. Poor!
Ant. He has more ways than one;
But he would choose them all before that one.
Vent. He first would choose an ague, or a fever.
Ant. No; it must be an ague, not a fever;
He has not warmth enough to die by that.
Vent. Or old age and a bed.
Ant. Ay, there's his choice,
He would live, like a lamp, to the last wink,
And crawl upon the utmost verge of life.
O Hercules! Why should a man like this,
Who dares not trust his fate for one great action,
Be all the care of Heaven? Why should he lord it
O'er fourscore thousand men, of whom each one
Is braver than himself?
Vent. You conquered for him:
Philippi knows it; there you shared with him
That empire, which your sword made all your own.
Ant. Fool that I was, upon my eagle's wings
I bore this wren, till I was tired with soaring,
And now he mounts above me.
Good heavens, is this,—is this the man who braves me?
Who bids my age make way? Drives me before him,
To the world's ridge, and sweeps me off like rubbish?
Vent. Sir, we lose time; the troops are mounted all.
Ant. Then give the word to march:
I long to leave this prison of a town,
To join thy legions; and, in open field,

Once more to show my face. Lead, my deliverer.

Enter Alexas.

Alex. Great emperor,
In mighty arms renowned above mankind,
But, in soft pity to the opprest, a god;
This message sends the mournful Cleopatra
To her departing lord.
Vent. Smooth sycophant!
Alex. A thousand wishes, and ten thousand prayers,
Millions of blessings wait you to the wars;
Millions of sighs and tears she sends you too,
And would have sent
As many dear embraces to your arms,
As many parting kisses to your lips;
But those, she fears, have wearied you already.
Vent. [*aside*]. False crocodile!
Alex. And yet she begs not now, you would not leave her;
That were a wish too mighty for her hopes,
Too presuming
For her low fortune, and your ebbing love;
That were a wish for her more prosperous days,
Her blooming beauty, and your growing kindness.
Ant. [*aside*]. Well, I must man it out:—what would the queen?
Alex. First, to these noble warriors, who attend
Your daring courage in the chase of fame,—
Too daring, and too dangerous for her quiet,—
She humbly recommends all she holds dear,
All her own cares and fears,—the care of you.
Vent. Yes, witness Actium.
Ant. Let him speak, Ventidius.
Alex. You, when his matchless valor bears him forward,
With ardor too heroic, on his foes,
Fall down, as she would do, before his feet;
Lie in his way, and stop the paths of death:
Tell him, this god is not invulnerable;
That absent Cleopatra bleeds in him;
And, that you may remember her petition,
She begs you wear these trifles, as a pawn,
Which, at your wished return, she will redeem [*Gives jewels to the Commanders.*
With all the wealth of Egypt;
This to the great Ventidius she presents,
Whom she can never count her enemy,
Because he loves her lord.
Vent. Tell her, I'll none on't;
I'm not ashamed of honest poverty;
Not all the diamonds of the East can bribe
Ventidius from his faith. I hope to see
These and the rest of all her sparkling store,
Where they shall more deservingly be placed.
Ant. And who must wear 'em then?
Vent. The wronged Octavia.
Ant. You might have spared that word.
Vent. And he that bribe.
Ant. But have I no remembrance?
Alex. Yes, a dear one;
Your slave the queen——
Ant. My mistress.
Alex. Then your mistress;
Your mistress would, she says, have sent her soul,
But that you had long since; she humbly begs
This ruby bracelet, set with bleeding hearts,
(The emblems of her own), may bind your arm. [*Presenting a bracelet.*
Vent. Now, my best lord,—in honor's name, I ask you,
For manhood's sake, and for your own dear safety,—
Touch not these poisoned gifts,
Infected by the sender; touch 'em not;
Myriads of bluest plagues lie underneath 'em,
And more than aconite has dipt the silk.
Ant. Nay, now you grow too cynical, Ventidius:
A lady's favors may be worn with honor.
What, to refuse her bracelet! On my soul,
When I lie pensive in my tent alone,
'Twill pass the wakeful hours of winter nights,
To tell these pretty beads upon my arm,
To count for every one a soft embrace,
A melting kiss at such and such a time,
And now and then the fury of her love,
When——And what harm's in this?
Alex. None, none, my lord,
But what's to her, that now 'tis past for ever.
Ant. [*going to tie it*]. We soldiers are so awkward—help me tie it.
Alex. In faith, my lord, we courtiers too are awkward
In these affairs; so are all men indeed:
Even I, who am not one. But shall I speak?
Ant. Yes, freely.
Alex. Then, my lord, fair hands alone
Are fit to tie it; she, who sent it can.
Vent. Hell, death! this eunuch pander ruins you.
You will not see her?
[Alexas *whispers an Attendant, who goes out.*
Ant. But to take my leave.
Vent. Then I have washed an Æthiop. You're undone;
You're in the toils; you're taken; you're destroyed:
Her eyes do Cæsar's work.
Ant. You fear too soon.
I'm constant to myself: I know my strength;
And yet she shall not think me barbarous neither,
Born in the depths of Afric; I'm a Roman,
Bred in the rules of soft humanity.

A guest, and kindly used, should bid farewell.
Vent. You do not know
How weak you are to her, how much an infant;
You are not proof against a smile, or glance;
A sigh will quite disarm you.
Ant. See, she comes!
Now you shall find your error. Gods, I thank you:
I formed the danger greater than it was,
And now 'tis near, 'tis lessened.
Vent. Mark the end yet.

Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, *and* Iras.

Ant. Well, madam, we are met.
Cleo. Is this a meeting?
Then, we must part?
Ant. We must.
Cleo. Who says we must?
Ant. Our own hard fates.
Cleo. We make those fates ourselves.
Ant. Yes, we have made 'em; we have loved each other,
Into our mutual ruin.
Cleo. The gods have seen my joys with envious eyes;
I have no friends in heaven; and all the world,
(As 'twere the business of mankind to part us),
Is armed against my love; even you yourself
Join with the rest; you, you are armed against me.
Ant. I will be justified in all I do
To late posterity, and therefore hear me.
If I mix a lie
With any truth, reproach me freely with it;
Else, favor me with silence.
Cleo. You command me,
And I am dumb.
Vent. I like this well; he shows authority.
Ant. That I derive my ruin
From you alone——
Cleo. O heavens! I ruin you!
Ant. You promised me your silence, and you break it
Ere I have scarce begun.
Cleo. Well, I obey you.
Ant. When I beheld you first, it was in Egypt,
Ere Cæsar saw your eyes; you gave me love,
And were too young to know it; that I settled
Your father in his throne, was for your sake;
I left the acknowledgment for time to ripen.
Cæsar stept in, and, with a greedy hand,
Plucked the green fruit, ere the first blush of red,
Yet cleaving to the bough. He was my lord,
And was, beside, too great for me to rival;
But, I deserved you first, though he enjoyed you.
When, after, I beheld you in Cilicia,
An enemy to Rome, I pardoned you.
Cleo. I cleared myself——
Ant. Again you break your promise.
I loved you still, and took your weak excuses,
Took you into my bosom, stained by Cæsar,
And not half mine: I went to Egypt with you,
And hid me from the business of the world,
Shut out inquiring nations from my sight,
To give whole years to you.
Vent. [*aside*]. Yes, to your shame be't spoken.
Ant. How I loved,
Witness, ye days and nights, and all ye hours,
That danced away with down upon your feet,
As all your business were to count my passion!
One day passed by, and nothing saw but love;
Another came, and still 'twas only love:
The suns were wearied out with looking on,
And I untired with loving.
I saw you every day, and all the day;
And every day was still but as the first,
So eager was I still to see you more.
Vent. 'Tis all too true.
Ant. Fulvia, my wife, grew jealous,
As she indeed had reason, raised a war
In Italy, to call me back.
Vent. But yet
You went not.
Ant. While within your arms I lay,
The world fell mouldering from my hands each hour,
And left me scarce a grasp—I thank your love for't.
Vent. Well pushed: that last was home.
Cleo. Yet may I speak?
Ant. If I have urged a falsehood, yes; else, not.
Your silence says, I have not. Fulvia died,
(Pardon, you gods, with my unkindness died);
To set the world at peace, I took Octavia,
This Cæsar's sister; in her pride of youth,
And flower of beauty, did I wed that lady,
Whom blushing I must praise, because I left her.
You called; my love obeyed the fatal summons:
This raised the Roman arms; the cause was yours.
I would have fought by land, where I was stronger;
You hindered it; yet, when I fought at sea,
Forsook me fighting; and (O stain to honor!
O lasting shame!) I knew not that I fled;
But fled to follow you.

Vent. What haste she made to hoist her purple sails!
And, to appear magnificent in flight,
Drew half our strength away.
Ant. All this you caused.
And, would you multiply more ruins on me?
This honest man, my best, my only friend,
Has gathered up the shipwreck of my fortunes;
Twelve legions I have left, my last recruits.
And you have watched the news, and bring your eyes
To seize them too. If you have aught to answer,
Now speak, you have free leave.
Alex. [*aside*]. She stands confounded:
Despair is in her eyes.
Vent. Now lay a sigh in the way to stop his passage:
Prepare a tear, and bid it for his legions;
'Tis like they shall be sold.
Cleo. How shall I plead my cause, when you, my judge,
Already have condemned me? Shall I bring
The love you bore me for my advocate?
That now is turned against me, that destroys me;
For love, once past, is, at the best, forgotten;
But oftener sours to hate: 'twill please my lord
To ruin me, and therefore I'll be guilty.
But, could I once have thought it would have pleased you,
That you would pry, with narrow searching eyes,
Into my faults, severe to my destruction,
And watching all advantages with care,
That serve to make me wretched? Speak, my lord,
For I end here. Though I deserved this usage,
Was it like you to give it?
Ant. O, you wrong me,
To think I sought this parting, or desired
To accuse you more than what will clear myself,
And justify this breach.
Cleo. Thus low I thank you;
And, since my innocence will not offend,
I shall not blush to own it.
Vent. After this,
I think she'll blush at nothing.
Cleo. You seemed grieved
(And therein you are kind), that Cæsar first
Enjoyed my love, though you deserved it better;
I grieve for that, my lord, much more than you;
For, had I first been yours, it would have saved
My second choice: I never had been his,
And ne'er had been but yours. But Cæsar first,
You say, possessed my love. Not so, my lord:
He first possessed my person; you, my love:
Cæsar loved me; but I loved Antony.
If I endured him after, 'twas because
I judged it due to the first name of men;
And, half constrained, I gave, as to a tyrant,
What he would take by force.
Vent. O Siren! Siren!
Yet grant that all the love she boasts were true,
Has she not ruined you? I still urge that,
The fatal consequence.
Cleo. The consequence indeed,
For I dare challenge him, my greatest foe,
To say it was designed; 'tis true, I loved you,
And kept you far from an uneasy wife,—
Such Fulvia was.
Yes, but he'll say, you left Octavia for me;—
And, can you blame me to receive that love,
Which quitted such desert, for worthless me?
How often have I wished some other Cæsar,
Great as the first, and as the second young,
Would court my love, to be refused for you!
Vent. Words, words; but Actium, sir; remember Actium.
Cleo. Even there, I dare his malice. True, I counselled
To fight at sea; but I betrayed you not.
I fled, but not to the enemy. 'Twas fear;
Would I had been a man, not to have feared!
For none would then have envied me your friendship,
Who envy me your love.
Ant. We're both unhappy:
If nothing else, yet our ill fortune parts us.
Speak; would you have me perish by my stay?
Cleo. If, as a friend, you ask my judgment, go;
If, as a lover, stay. If you must perish——
'Tis a hard word—but stay.
Vent. See now the effects of her so boasted love!
She strives to drag you down to ruin with her;
But, could she scape without you, oh, how soon
Would she let go her hold, and haste to shore,
And never look behind!
Cleo. Then judge my love by this.
[*Giving* ANTONY *a writing.*
Could I have borne
A life or death, a happiness or woe,
From yours divided, this had given me means.
Ant. By Hercules, the writing of Octavius!
I know it well: 'tis that proscribing hand,
Young as it was, that led the way to mine,

And left me but the second place in murder.—
See, see, Ventidius! here he offers Egypt,
And joins all Syria to it, as a present;
So, in requital, she forsake my fortunes,
And join her arms with his.
Cleo. And yet you leave me!
You leave me, Antony; and yet I love you,
Indeed I do: I have refused a kingdom;
That's a trifle;
For I could part with life, with anything,
But only you. Oh, let me die but with you!
Is that a hard request?
Ant. Next living with you,
'Tis all that heaven can give.
Alex. [*aside*]. He melts; we conquer.
Cleo. No; you shall go: your interest calls you hence;
Yes; your dear interest pulls too strong, for these
Weak arms to hold you here.
[*Takes his hand.*
Go; leave me, soldier
(For you're no more a lover): leave me dying:
Push me, all pale and panting, from your bosom,
And, when your march begins, let one run after,
Breathless almost for joy, and cry, "She's dead."
The soldiers shout; you then, perhaps, may sigh,
And muster all your Roman gravity:
Ventidius chides; and straight your brow clears up,
As I had never been.
Ant. Gods, 'tis too much;
Too much for man to bear.
Cleo. What is't for me then,
A weak, forsaken woman, and a lover?—
Here let me breathe my last: envy me not
This minute in your arms: I'll die apace,
As fast as e'er I can, and end your trouble.
Ant. Die! rather let me perish; loosened nature
Leap from its hinges, sink the props of heaven,
And fall the skies, to crush the nether world!
My eyes, my soul, my all! [*Embraces her.*
Vent. And what's this toy,
In balance with your fortune, honor, fame?
Ant. What is't, Ventidius?—it outweighs them all;
Why, we have more than conquered Cæsar now:
My queen's not only innocent, but loves me.
This, this is she, who drags me down to ruin!
"But, could she scape without me, with what haste
Would she let slip her hold, and make to shore,
And never look behind!"
Down on thy knees, blasphemer as thou art,
And ask forgiveness of wronged innocence.
Vent. I'll rather die, than take it. Will you go?
Ant. Go! whither? Go from all that's excellent?
Faith, honor, virtue, all good things forbid,
That I should go from her, who sets my love
Above the price of kingdoms! Give, you gods,
Give to your boy, your Cæsar,
This rattle of a globe to play withal,
This gewgaw world, and put him cheaply off:
I'll not be pleased with less than Cleopatra.
Cleo. She's wholly yours. My heart's so full of joy,
That I shall do some wild extravagance
Of love, in public; and the foolish world,
Which knows not tenderness, will think me mad.
Vent. O women! women! women! all the gods
Have not such power of doing good to man,
As you of doing harm. [*Exit.*
Ant. Our men are armed.
Unbar the gate that looks to Cæsar's camp;
I would revenge the treachery he meant me;
And long security makes conquest easy.
I'm eager to return before I go;
For, all the pleasures I have known beat thick
On my remembrance.—How I long for night!
That both the sweets of mutual love may try,
And once triumph o'er Cæsar ere we die.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

Scene I

At one door enter Cleopatra, Charmion, Iras, *and* Alexas, *a Train of Egyptians: at the other* Antony *and Romans. The entrance on both sides is prepared by music; the trumpets first sounding on* Antony's *part: then answered by timbrels, etc., on* Cleopatra's. Charmion *and* Iras *hold a laurel wreath betwixt them. A Dance of Egyptians. After the ceremony,* Cleopatra *crowns* Antony.

Ant. I thought how those white arms would fold me in,
And strain me close, and melt me into love;
So pleased with that sweet image, I sprung forwards,
And added all my strength to every blow.
Cleo. Come to me, come, my soldier, to my arms!
You've been too long away from my embraces;
But, when I have you fast, and all my own,
With broken murmurs, and with amorous sighs,

I'll say, you were unkind, and punish you,
And mark you red with many an eager kiss.
Ant. My brighter Venus!
Cleo. O my greater Mars!
Ant. Thou join'st us well, my love!
Suppose me come from the Phlegræan plains,
Where gasping giants lay, cleft by my sword,
And mountain-tops pared off each other blow,
To bury those I slew. Receive me, goddess!
Let Cæsar spread his subtle nets; like Vulcan,
In thy embraces I would be beheld
By heaven and earth at once;
And make their envy what they meant their sport.
Let those, who took us, blush; I would love on,
With awful state, regardless of their frowns,
As their superior gods.
There's no satiety of love in thee:
Enjoyed, thou still art new; perpetual spring
Is in thy arms; the ripened fruit but falls,
And blossoms rise to fill its empty place;
And I grow rich by giving.

Enter VENTIDIUS, *and stands apart.*

Alex. Oh, now the danger's past, your general comes!
He joins not in your joys, nor minds your triumphs;
But, with contracted brows, looks frowning on,
As envying your success.
Ant. Now, on my soul, he loves me; truly loves me:
He never flattered me in any vice,
But awes me with his virtue: even this minute,
Methinks, he has a right of chiding me.
Lead to the temple; I'll avoid his presence;
It checks too strong upon me.
[*Exeunt the rest.*
[*As* ANTONY *is going,* VENTIDIUS *pulls him by the robe.*
Vent. Emperor!
Ant. [*looking back*]. 'Tis the old argument; I pr'ythee, spare me.
Vent. But this one hearing, emperor.
Ant. Let go
My robe; or, by my father Hercules—
Vent. By Hercules' father, that's yet greater,
I bring you somewhat you would wish to know.
Ant. Thou see'st we are observed; attend me here,
And I'll return. [*Exit.*
Vent. I'm waning in his favor, yet I love him;
I love this man, who runs to meet his ruin;
And sure the gods, like me, are fond of him:
His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,
As would confound their choice to punish one,
And not reward the other.

Enter ANTONY.

Ant. We can conquer,
You see, without your aid.
We have dislodged their troops;
They look on us at distance, and, like curs
Scaped from the lion's paws, they bay far off,
And lick their wounds, and faintly threaten war.
Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
Lie breathless on the plain.
Vent. 'Tis well; and he,
Who lost 'em, could have spared ten thousand more.
Yet if, by this advantage, you could gain
An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
Of arms——
Ant. Oh, think not on't, Ventidius!
The boy pursues my ruin, he'll no peace;
His malice is considerate in advantage.
Oh, he's the coolest murderer! so staunch,
He kills, and keeps his temper.
Vent. Have you no friend
In all his army, who has power to move him?
Mæcenas, or Agrippa, might do much.
Ant. They're both too deep in Cæsar's interests.
We'll work it out by dint of sword, or perish.
Vent. Fain I would find some other.
Ant. Thank thy love.
Some four or five such victories as this
Will save thy further pains.
Vent. Expect no more; Cæsar is on his guard:
I know, sir, you have conquered against odds;
But still you draw supplies from one poor town,
And of Egyptians; he has all the world,
And, at his beck, nations come pouring in,
To fill the gaps you make. Pray, think again.
Ant. Why dost thou drive me from myself, to search
For foreign aids?—to hunt my memory,
And range all o'er a waste and barren place,
To find a friend? The wretched have no friends.
Yet I had one, the bravest youth of Rome,
Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women:
He could resolve his mind, as fire does wax,
From that hard rugged image melt him down,
And mould him in what softer form he pleased.

Vent. Him would I see; that man of all the world;
Just such a one we want.
Ant. He loved me too;
I was his soul; he lived not but in me:
We were so closed within each other's breasts,
The rivets were not found, that joined us first.
That does not reach us yet: we were so mixt,
As meeting streams, both to ourselves were lost;
We were one mass; we could not give or take,
But from the same; for he was I, I he.
Vent. [*aside*]. He moves as I would wish him.
Ant. After this,
I need not tell his name;—'twas Dolabella.
Vent. He's now in Cæsar's camp.
Ant. No matter where,
Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly,
That I forbade him Cleopatra's sight,
Because I feared he loved her: he confessed,
He had a warmth, which, for my sake, he stifled;
For 'twere impossible that two, so one,
Should not have loved the same. When he departed,
He took no leave; and that confirmed my thoughts.
Vent. It argues, that he loved you more than her,
Else he had stayed; but he perceived you jealous,
And would not grieve his friend; I know he loves you.
Ant. I should have seen him, then, ere now.
Vent. Perhaps
He has thus long been laboring for your peace.
Ant. Would he were here!
Vent. Would you believe he loved you? I read your answer in your eyes, you would.
Not to conceal it longer, he has sent
A messenger from Cæsar's camp, with letters.
Ant. Let him appear.
Vent. I'll bring him instantly.
[*Exit* Ventidius, *and re-enters immediately with* Dolabella.
Ant. 'Tis he himself! himself, by holy friendship!
[*Runs to embrace him.*
Art thou returned at last, my better half?
Come, give me all myself!
Let me not live,
If the young bridegroom, longing for his night,
Was ever half so fond.

Dola. I must be silent, for my soul is busy
About a nobler work: she's new come home,
Like a long-absent man, and wanders o'er
Each room, a stranger to her own, to look
If all be safe.
Ant. Thou hast what's left of me;
For I am now so sunk from what I was,
Thou find'st me at my lowest water-mark.
The rivers that ran in, and raised my fortunes,
Are all dried up, or take another course:
What I have left is from my native spring;
I've still a heart that swells, in scorn of fate,
And lifts me to my banks.
Dola. Still you are lord of all the world to me.
Ant. Why, then I yet am so; for thou art all.
If I had any joy when thou wert absent,
I grudged it to myself; methought I robbed
Thee of thy part. But, O my Dolabella!
Thou hast beheld me other than I am.
Hast thou not seen my morning chambers filled
With sceptred slaves, who waited to salute me?
With eastern monarchs, who forgot the sun,
To worship my uprising? Menial kings
Ran coursing up and down my palace-yard,
Stood silent in my presence, watched my eyes,
And, at my least command, all started out,
Like racers to the goal.
Dola. Slaves to your fortune.
Ant. Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?
Vent. What you have made yourself; I will not flatter.
Ant. Is this friendly done?
Dola. Yes; when his end is so, I must join with him;
Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide;
Why am I else your friend?
Ant. Take heed, young man,
How thou upbraid'st my love; the queen has eyes,
And thou too hast a soul. Canst thou remember,
When, swelled with hatred, thou beheld'st her first,
As accessary to thy brother's death?
Dola. Spare my remembrance; 'twas a guilty day,
And still the blush hangs here.
Ant. To clear herself
For sending him no aid, she came from Egypt.
Her galley down the silver Cydnos rowed,
The tackling silk, the streamers waved with gold;
The gentle winds were lodged in purple sails;

Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were placed;
Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.
Dola. No more; I would not hear it.
Ant. Oh, you must!
She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
And cast a look so languishingly sweet,
As if, secure of all beholders' hearts,
Neglecting, she could take 'em: boys, like Cupids,
Stood fanning with their painted wings the winds
That played about her face. But if she smiled,
A darting glory seemed to blaze abroad,
That men's desiring eyes were never wearied,
But hung upon the object. To soft flutes
The silver oars kept time; and while they played,
The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight;
And both to thought. 'Twas heaven, or somewhat more:
For she so charmed all hearts, that gazing crowds
Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
To give their welcome voice.
Then, Dolabella, where was then thy soul?
Was not thy fury quite disarmed with wonder?
Didst thou not shrink behind me from those eyes
And whisper in my ear, "Oh, tell her not
That I accused her with my brother's death?"
Dola. And should my weakness be a plea for yours?
Mine was an age when love might be excused,
When kindly warmth, and when my springing youth
Made it a debt to nature. Yours——
Vent. Speak boldly.
Yours, he would say, in your declining age,
When no more heat was left but what you forced,
When all the sap was needful for the trunk,
When it went down, then you constrained the course,
And robbed from nature, to supply desire;
In you (I would not use so harsh a word)
'Tis but plain dotage.
Ant. Ha!
Dola. 'Twas urged too home.
But yet the loss was private, that I made;
'Twas but myself I lost: I lost no legions;
I had no world to lose, no people's love.
Ant. This from a friend?
Dola. Yes, Antony, a true one;
A friend so tender, that each word I speak
Stabs my own heart, before it reach your ear.
Oh, judge me not less kind, because I chide!
To Cæsar I excuse you.
Ant. O ye gods!
Have I then lived to be excused to Cæsar?
Dola. As to your equal.
Ant. Well, he's but my equal:
While I wear this, he never shall be more.
Dola. I bring conditions from him.
Ant. Are they noble?
Methinks thou shouldst not bring 'em else; yet he
Is full of deep dissembling; knows no honor
Divided from his interest. Fate mistook him;
For nature meant him for an usurer:
He's fit indeed to buy, not conquer kingdoms.
Vent. Then, granting this,
What power was theirs, who wrought so hard a temper
To honorable terms?
Ant. It was my Dolabella, or some god.
Dola. Nor I, nor yet Mæcenas, nor Agrippa:
They were your enemies; and I, a friend,
Too weak alone; yet 'twas a Roman's deed.
Ant. 'Twas like a Roman done: show me that man,
Who has preserved my life, my love, my honor;
Let me but see his face.
Vent. That task is mine,
And, Heaven, thou know'st how pleasing.
[*Exit* Ventidius.
Dola. You'll remember
To whom you stand obliged?
Ant. When I forget it,
Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse.
My queen shall thank him too.
Dola. I fear she will not.
Ant. But she shall do it. The queen, my Dolabella!
Hast thou not still some grudgings of thy fever?
Dola. I would not see her lost.
Ant. When I forsake her,
Leave me, my better stars! for she has truth
Beyond her beauty. Cæsar tempted her,
At no less price than kingdoms, to betray me;
But she resisted all: and yet thou chid'st me
For loving her too well. Could I do so?
Dola. Yes; there's my reason.

Re-enter Ventidius, *with* Octavia, *leading* Antony's *two little Daughters.*

Ant. [*starting back*]. Where?—Octavia there!
Vent. What, is she poison to you?—a disease?
Look on her, view her well, and those she brings:

Are they all strangers to your eyes? has nature
No secret call, no whisper they are yours?
Dola. For shame, my lord, if not for love, receive 'em
With kinder eyes. If you confess a man,
Meet 'em, embrace 'em, bid 'em welcome to you.
Your arms should open, even without your knowledge,
To clasp 'em in; your feet should turn to wings,
To bear you to 'em; and your eyes dart out
And aim a kiss, ere you could reach the lips.
Ant. I stood amazed, to think how they came hither.
Vent. I sent for 'em; I brought 'em in unknown
To Cleopatra's guards.
Dola. Yet, are you cold?
Octav. Thus long I have attended for my welcome;
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect.
Who am I?
Ant. Cæsar's sister.
Octav. That's unkind.
Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister,
Know, I had still remained in Cæsar's camp:
But your Octavia, your much injured wife,
Though banished from your bed, driven from your house,
In spite of Cæsar's sister, still is yours.
'Tis true, I have a heart disdains your coldness,
And prompts me not to seek what you should offer;
But a wife's virtue still surmounts that pride.
I come to claim you as my own; to show
My duty first; to ask, nay beg, your kindness.
Your hand, my lord; 'tis mine, and I will have it. [*Taking his hand.*
Vent. Do, take it; thou deserv'st it.
Dola. On my soul,
And so she does: she's neither too submissive,
Nor yet too haughty; but so just a mean
Shows, as it ought, a wife and Roman too.
Ant. I fear, Octavia, you have begged my life.
Octav. Begged it, my lord?
Ant. Yes, begged it, my ambassadress;
Poorly and basely begged it of your brother.
Octav. Poorly and basely I could never beg:
Nor could my brother grant.
Ant. Shall I, who, to my kneeling slave, could say,
"Rise up, and be a king;" shall I fall down
And cry, "Forgive me, Cæsar!" Shall I set
A man, my equal, in the place of Jove,
As he could give me being? No; that word,
"Forgive," would choke me up,
And die upon my tongue.
Dola. You shall not need it.
Ant. I will not need it. Come, you've all betrayed me,—
My friend too!—to receive some vile conditions.
My wife has bought me, with her prayers and tears;
And now I must become her branded slave.
In every peevish mood, she will upbraid
The life she gave: if I but look awry,
She cries, "I'll tell my brother."
Octav. My hard fortune
Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes.
But the conditions I have brought are such
You need not blush to take; I love your honor,
Because 'tis mine; it never shall be said,
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
Sir, you are free; free, even from her you loathe;
For, though my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
I have a soul like yours; I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
I'll tell my brother we are reconciled;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the East; I may be dropt at Athens;
No matter where. I never will complain,
But only keep the barren name of wife,
And rid you of the trouble.
Vent. Was ever such a strife of sullen honor!
Both scorn to be obliged.
Dola. Oh, she has touched him in the tenderest part;
See how he reddens with despite and shame,
To be outdone in generosity!
Vent. See how he winks! how he dries up a tear,
That fain would fall!
Ant. Octavia, I have heard you, and must praise
The greatness of your soul;
But cannot yield to what you have proposed:
For I can ne'er be conquered but by love;
And you do all for duty. You would free me,
And would be dropt at Athens; was't not so?
Octav. It was, my lord.
Ant. Then I must be obliged
To one who loves me not; who, to herself,
May call me thankless and ungrateful man:—
I'll not endure it; no.
Vent. [*aside*]. I am glad it pinches there.
Octav. Would you triumph o'er poor Octavia's virtue?

That pride was all I had to bear me up;
That you might think you owed me for your life,
And owed it to my duty, not my love.
I have been injured, and my haughty soul
Could brook but ill the man who slights my bed.
Ant. Therefore you love me not.
Octav. Therefore, my lord,
I should not love you.
Ant. Therefore you would leave me?
Octav. And therefore I should leave you—if I could.
Dola. Her soul's too great, after such injuries,
To say she loves; and yet she lets you see it.
Her modesty and silence plead her cause.
Ant. O Dolabella, which way shall I turn?
I find a secret yielding in my soul;
But Cleopatra, who would die with me,
Must she be left? Pity pleads for Octavia;
But does it not plead more for Cleopatra?
Vent. Justice and pity both plead for Octavia;
For Cleopatra, neither.
One would be ruined with you; but she first
Had ruined you: the other, you have ruined,
And yet she would preserve you.
In everything their merits are unequal.
Ant. O my distracted soul!
Octav. Sweet heaven compose it!—
Come, come, my lord, if I can pardon you,
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these;
Are they not yours? or stand they thus neglected,
As they are mine? Go to him, children, go;
Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him;
For you may speak, and he may own you too,
Without a blush; and so he cannot all
His children: go, I say, and pull him to me,
And pull him to yourselves, from that bad woman.
You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms;
And you, Antonia, clasp about his waist:
If he will shake you off, if he will dash you
Against the pavement, you must bear it, children;
For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.
[*Here the Children go to him, etc.*
Vent. Was ever sight so moving?—Emperor!
Dola. Friend!
Octav. Husband!
Both Child. Father!
Ant. I am vanquished: take me,
Octavia; take me, children; share me all.
[*Embracing them.*
I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
And run out much, in riot, from your stock;
But all shall be amended.
Octav. O blest hour!
Dola. O happy change!
Vent. My joy stops at my tongue;
But it has found two channels here for one,
And bubbles out above.
Ant. [*to* OCTAV.]. This is thy triumph; lead me where thou wilt;
Even to thy brother's camp.
Octav. All there are yours.

Enter ALEXAS *hastily.*

Alex. The queen, my mistress, sir, and yours——
Ant. 'Tis past.—
Octavia, you shall stay this night; to-morrow,
Cæsar and we are one.
[*Exit leading* OCTAVIA; DOLABELLA *and the Children follow.*
Vent. There's news for you; run, my officious eunuch,
Be sure to be the first; haste forward:
Haste, my dear eunuch, haste. [*Exit.*
Alex. This downright fighting fool, this thick-skulled hero,
This blunt, unthinking instrument of death,
With plain dull virtue has outgone my wit.
Pleasure forsook my earliest infancy;
The luxury of others robbed my cradle,
And ravished thence the promise of a man.
Cast out from nature, disinherited
Of what her meanest children claim by kind,
Yet greatness kept me from contempt; that's gone.
Had Cleopatra followed my advice,
Then he had been betrayed who now forsakes.
She dies for love; but she has known its joys:
Gods, is this just, that I, who know no joys,
Must die, because she loves?

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, *Train.*

O madam, I have seen what blasts my eyes!
Octavia's here.
Cleo. Peace with that raven's note.
I know it too; and now am in
The pangs of death.
Alex. You are no more a queen;
Egypt is lost.
Cleo. What tell'st thou me of Egypt?
My life, my soul is lost! Octavia has him!—
O fatal name to Cleopatra's love!
My kisses, my embraces now are hers;
While I——But thou hast seen my rival; speak,
Does she deserve this blessing? Is she fair?
Bright as a goddess? and is all perfection
Confined to her? It is. Poor I was made
Of that coarse matter, which, when she was finished,
The gods threw by for rubbish.
Alex. She's indeed a very miracle.
Cleo. Death to my hopes, a miracle!

Alex. [*bowing*]. A miracle;
I mean of goodness; for in beauty, madam,
You make all wonders cease.
Cleo. I was too rash:
Take this in part of recompense. But, oh!
[*Giving a ring.*
I fear thou flatterest me.
Char. She comes! she's here!
Iras. Fly, madam, Cæsar's sister!
Cleo. Were she the sister of the thunderer Jove,
And bore her brother's lightning in her eyes,
Thus would I face my rival.
[*Meets* Octavia *with* Ventidius. Octavia *bears up to her. Their Trains come up on either side.*
Octav. I need not ask if you are Cleopatra;
Your haughty carriage——
Cleo. Shows I am a queen;
Nor need I ask you, who you are.
Octav. A Roman;
A name, that makes and can unmake a queen.
Cleo. Your lord, the man who serves me, is a Roman.
Octav. He was a Roman, till he lost that name,
To be a slave in Egypt; but I come
To free him thence.
Cleo. Peace, peace, my lover's Juno.
When he grew weary of that household clog,
He chose my easier bonds.
Octav. I wonder not
Your bonds are easy; you have long been practised
In that lascivious art. He's not the first
For whom you spread your snares: let Cæsar witness.
Cleo. I loved not Cæsar; 'twas but gratitude
I paid his love. The worst your malice can,
Is but to say the greatest of mankind
Has been my slave. The next, but far above him
In my esteem, is he whom law calls yours,
But whom his love made mine.
Octav. [*coming up close to her*]. I would view nearer
That face, which has so long usurped my right,
To find the inevitable charms, that catch
Mankind so sure, that ruined my dear lord.
Cleo. Oh, you do well to search; for had you known
But half these charms, you had not lost his heart.
Octav. Far be their knowledge from a Roman lady,
Far from a modest wife! Shame of our sex,
Dost thou not blush to own those black endearments,
That make sin pleasing?
Cleo. You may blush, who want 'em.
If bounteous nature, if indulgent heaven
Have given me charms to please the bravest man,
Should I not thank 'em? Should I be ashamed,
And not be proud? I am, that he has loved me;
And, when I love not him, heaven change this face
For one like that.
Octav. Thou lov'st him not so well.
Cleo. I love him better, and deserve him more.
Octav. You do not; cannot: you have been his ruin.
Who made him cheap at Rome, but Cleopatra?
Who made him scorned abroad, but Cleopatra?
At Actium, who betrayed him? Cleopatra.
Who made his children orphans, and poor me
A wretched widow? only Cleopatra.
Cleo. Yet she, who loves him best, is Cleopatra.
If you have suffered, I have suffered more.
You bear the specious title of a wife,
To gild your cause, and draw the pitying world
To favor it; the world contemns poor me,
For I have lost my honor, lost my fame,
And stained the glory of my royal house,
And all to bear the branded name of mistress.
There wants but life, and that too I would lose
For him I love.
Octav. Be't so, then; take thy wish.
[*Exit cum suis.*
Cleo. And 'tis my wish,
Now he is lost for whom alone I lived.
My sight grows dim, and every object dances,
And swims before me, in the maze of death.
My spirits, while they were opposed, kept up;
They could not sink beneath a rival's scorn!
But now she's gone, they faint.
Alex. Mine have had leisure
To recollect their strength, and furnish counsel,
To ruin her, who else must ruin you.
Cleo. Vain promiser!
Lead me, my Charmion; nay, your hand too, Iras.
My grief has weight enough to sink you both.
Conduct me to some solitary chamber,
And draw the curtains round;
Then leave me to myself, to take alone
My fill of grief:
There I till death will his unkindness weep;

As harmless infants moan themselves asleep. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

Scene I

Enter Antony *and* Dolabella.

Dola. Why would you shift it from yourself on me?
Can you not tell her, you must part?
Ant. I cannot.
I could pull out an eye, and bid it go,
And t'other should not weep. O Dolabella,
How many deaths are in this word, "Depart!"
I dare not trust my tongue to tell her so:
One look of hers would thaw me into tears,
And I should melt, till I were lost again.
Dola. Then let Ventidius;
He's rough by nature.
Ant. O, he'll speak too harshly;
He'll kill her with the news: thou, only thou.
Dola. Nature has cast me in so soft a mould,
That but to hear a story, feigned for pleasure,
Of some sad lover's death, moistens my eyes,
And robs me of my manhood. I should speak
So faintly, with such fear to grieve her heart,
She'd not believe it earnest.
Ant. Therefore,—therefore
Thou only, thou art fit. Think thyself me;
And when thou speak'st (but let it first be long),
Take off the edge from every sharper sound,
And let our parting be as gently made,
As other loves begin; wilt thou do this?
Dola. What you have said so sinks into my soul,
That, if I must speak, I shall speak just so.
Ant. I leave you then to your sad task: farewell.
I sent her word to meet you.
[*Goes to the door, and comes back.*
I forgot;
Let her be told, I'll make her peace with mine:
Her crown and dignity shall be preserved,
If I have power with Cæsar.——O, be sure
To think on that.
Dola. Fear not, I will remember.
[Antony *goes again to the door, and comes back.*
Ant. And tell her, too, how much I was constrained;
I did not this, but with extremest force:
Desire her not to hate my memory,
For I still cherish hers;——insist on that.
Dola. Trust me, I'll not forget it.
Ant. Then that's all.
[*Goes out, and returns again.*
Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?
Tell her, though we shall never meet again,
If I should hear she took another love,
The news would break my heart.—Now I must go;
For every time I have returned, I feel
My soul more tender; and my next command
Would be, to bid her stay, and ruin both.
[*Exit.*
Dola. Men are but children of a larger growth;
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain;
And yet the soul, shut up in her dark room,
Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees nothing;
But, like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and casts it outward
To the world's open view; thus I discovered,
And blamed the love of ruined Antony;
Yet wish that I were he, to be so ruined.

Enter Ventidius *above.*

Vent. Alone, and talking to himself? concerned too?
Perhaps my guess is right; he loved her once,
And may pursue it still.
Dola. O friendship! friendship!
Ill canst thou answer this; and reason, worse:
Unfaithful in the attempt; hopeless to win;
And if I win, undone: mere madness all.
And yet the occasion's fair. What injury
To him, to wear the robe which he throws by!
Vent. None, none at all. This happens as I wish,
To ruin her yet more with Antony.

Enter Cleopatra, *talking with* Alexas; Charmion, Iras, *on the other side.*

Dola. She comes! What charms have sorrow on that face!
Sorrow seems pleased to dwell with so much sweetness;
Yet, now and then, a melancholy smile
Breaks loose, like lightning in a winter's night,
And shows a moment's day.
Vent. If she should love him too! her eunuch there?
That porc'pisce bodes ill weather. Draw, draw nearer,
Sweet devil, that I may hear.
Alex. Believe me; try
[Dolabella *goes over to* Charmion *and* Iras; *seems to talk with them.*
To make him jealous; jealousy is like

A polished glass held to the lips when life's
in doubt;
If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp,
and show it.
Cleo. I grant you, jealousy's a proof of
love,
But 'tis a weak and unavailing medicine;
It puts out the disease, and makes it show,
But has no power to cure.
Alex. 'Tis your last remedy, and strong-
est too:
And then this Dolabella, who so fit
To practise on? He's handsome, valiant,
young,
And looks as he were laid for nature's bait,
To catch weak women's eyes.
He stands already more than half suspected
Of loving you; the least kind word or glance,
You give this youth, will kindle him with
love:
Then, like a burning vessel set adrift,
You'll send him down amain before the
wind,
To fire the heart of jealous Antony.
Cleo. Can I do this? Ah, no; my love's
so true,
That I can neither hide it where it is,
Nor show it where it is not. Nature meant
me
A wife; a silly, harmless, household dove,
Fond without art, and kind without deceit;
But Fortune, that has made a mistress of
me,
Has thrust me out to the wide world, un-
furnished
Of falsehood to be happy.
Alex. Force yourself.
The event will be, your lover will return,
Doubly desirous to possess the good
Which once he feared to lose.
Cleo. I must attempt it;
But oh, with what regret!
[*Exit* ALEXAS. *She comes up to* DOLA-
BELLA.
Vent. So, now the scene draws near;
they're in my reach.
Cleo. [*to* DOLA.]. Discoursing with my
women! might not I
Share in your entertainment?
Char. You have been
The subject of it, madam.
Cleo. How! and how?
Iras. Such praises of your beauty!
Cleo. Mere poetry.
Your Roman wits, your Gallus and Tibul-
lus,
Have taught you this from Cytheris and
Delia.
Dola. Those Roman wits have never been
in Egypt;
Cytheris and Delia else had been unsung:
I, who have seen——had I been born a poet,
Should choose a nobler name.
Cleo. You flatter me.
But, 'tis your nation's vice: all of your
country
Are flatterers, and all false. Your friend's
like you.
I'm sure, he sent you not to speak these
words.
Dola. No, madam; yet he sent me——
Cleo. Well, he sent you——
Dola. Of a less pleasing errand.
Cleo. How less pleasing?
Less to yourself, or me?
Dola. Madam, to both;
For you must mourn, and I must grieve to
cause it.
Cleo. You, Charmion, and your fellow,
stand at distance.—
[*Aside*]—Hold up, my spirits.——Well, now
your mournful matter;
For I'm prepared, perhaps can guess it
too.
Dola. I wish you would; for 'tis a thank-
less office,
To tell ill news: and I, of all your sex,
Most fear displeasing you.
Cleo. Of all your sex,
I soonest could forgive you, if you should.
Vent. Most delicate advances! Women!
Women!
Dear, damned, inconstant sex!
Cleo. In the first place,
I am to be forsaken; is't not so?
Dola. I wish I could not answer to that
question.
Cleo. Then pass it o'er, because it
troubles you:
I should have been more grieved another
time.
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom——Farewell,
Egypt!
Yet, is there any more?
Dola. Madam, I fear
Your too deep sense of grief has turned your
reason.
Cleo. No, no, I'm not run mad; I can
bear fortune:
And love may be expelled by other love,
As poisons are by poisons.
Dola. You o'erjoy me, madam,
To find your griefs so moderately borne.
You've heard the worst; all are not false
like him.
Cleo. No; Heaven forbid they should.
Dola. Some men are constant.
Cleo. And constancy deserves reward,
that's certain.
Dola. Deserves it not; but give it leave
to hope.
Vent. I'll swear, thou hast my leave. I
have enough:
But how to manage this! Well, I'll con-
sider. [*Exit.*
Dola. I came prepared
To tell you heavy news; news, which I
thought

Would fright the blood from your pale cheeks to hear:
But you have met it with a cheerfulness,
That makes my task more easy; and my tongue,
Which on another's message was employed,
Would gladly speak its own.
Cleo. Hold, Dolabella.
First tell me, were you chosen by my lord?
Or sought you this employment?
Dola. He picked me out; and, as his bosom friend,
He charged me with his words.
Cleo. The message then
I know was tender, and each accent smooth,
To mollify that rugged word, "Depart."
Dola. Oh, you mistake; he chose the harshest words;
With fiery eyes, and with contracted brows,
He coined his face in the severest stamp;
And fury shook his fabric, like an earthquake;
He heaved for vent, and burst like bellowing Ætna,
In sounds scarce human—"Hence away for ever,
Let her begone, the blot of my renown;
And bane of all my hopes!
[*All the time of this speech,* CLEOPATRA *seems more and more concerned, till she sinks quite down.*
Let her be driven, as far as men can think,
From man's commerce! she'll poison to the centre."
Cleo. Oh, I can bear no more!
Dola. Help, help!—O wretch! O cursed, cursed wretch!
What have I done!
Char. Help, chafe her temples, Iras.
Iras. Bend, bend her forward quickly.
Char. Heaven be praised,
She comes again.
Cleo. O, let him not approach me.
Why have you brought me back to this loathed being,
The abode of falsehood, violated vows,
And injured love? For pity, let me go;
For, if there be a place of long repose,
I'm sure I want it. My disdainful lord
Can never break that quiet; nor awake
The sleeping soul, with hollowing in my tomb
Such words as fright her hence.—Unkind, unkind!
Dola. [*kneeling*]. Believe me, 'tis against myself I speak;
That sure desires belief; I injured him:
My friend ne'er spoke those words. O, had you seen
How often he came back, and every time
With something more obliging and more kind,
To add to what he said; what dear farewells;
How almost vanquished by his love he parted,
And leaned to what unwillingly he left!
I, traitor as I was, for love of you
(But what can you not do, who made me false?)
I forged that lie; for whose forgiveness kneels
This self-accused, self-punished criminal.
Cleo. With how much ease believe we what we wish!
Rise, Dolabella; if you have been guilty,
I have contributed, and too much love
Has made me guilty too.
The advance of kindness, which I made, was feigned,
To call back fleeting love by jealousy;
But 'twould not last. Oh, rather let me lose,
Than so ignobly trifle with his heart.
Dola. I find your breast fenced round from human reach,
Transparent as a rock of solid crystal;
Seen through, but never pierced. My friend, my friend,
What endless treasure hast thou thrown away;
And scattered, like an infant, in the ocean,
Vain sums of wealth, which none can gather thence!
Cleo. Could you not beg
An hour's admittance to his private ear?
Like one, who wanders through long barren wilds
And yet foreknows no hospitable inn
Is near to succor hunger, eats his fill,
Before his painful march;
So would I feed a while my famished eyes
Before we part; for I have far to go,
If death be far, and never must return.

VENTIDIUS *with* OCTAVIA, *behind.*

Vent. From hence you may discover—oh, sweet, sweet!
Would you indeed? The pretty hand in earnest?
Dola. [*takes her hand*]. I will, for this reward. Draw it not back.
'Tis all I e'er will beg.
Vent. They turn upon us.
Octav. What quick eyes has guilt!
Vent. Seem not to have observed 'em, and go on.

They enter.

Dola. Saw you the emperor, Ventidius?
Vent. No.
I sought him; but I heard that he was private,
None with him but Hipparchus, his freedman.
Dola. Know you his business?
Vent. Giving him instructions,
And letters to his brother Cæsar.

Dola. Well,
He must be found.
[*Exeunt* Dolabella *and* Cleopatra.
Octav. Most glorious impudence!
Vent. She looked, methought,
As she would say, "Take your old man, Octavia;
Thank you, I'm better here."
Well, but what use
Make we of this discovery?
Octav. Let it die.
Vent. I pity Dolabella; but she's dangerous:
Her eyes have power beyond Thessalian charms,
To draw the moon from heaven; for eloquence,
The sea-green Sirens taught her voice their flattery;
And, while she speaks, night steals upon the day,
Unmarked of those that hear. Then she's so charming,
Age buds at sight of her, and swells to youth:
The holy priests gaze on her when she smiles;
And with heaved hands, forgetting gravity,
They bless her wanton eyes: even I, who hate her,
With a malignant joy behold such beauty;
And, while I curse, desire it. Antony
Must needs have some remains of passion still,
Which may ferment into a worse relapse,
If now not fully cured. I know, this minute,
With Cæsar he's endeavoring her peace.
Octav. You have prevailed:——but for a further purpose. [*Walks off.*
I'll prove how he will relish this discovery.
What, make a strumpet's peace! it swells my heart:
It must not, shall not be.
Vent. His guards appear.
Let me begin, and you shall second me.

Enter Antony.

Ant. Octavia, I was looking you, my love:
What, are your letters ready? I have given
My last instructions.
Octav. Mine, my lord, are written.
Ant. Ventidius. [*Drawing him aside.*
Vent. My lord?
Ant. A word in private.—
When saw you Dolabella?
Vent. Now, my lord,
He parted hence; and Cleopatra with him.
Ant. Speak softly.—'Twas by my command he went,
To bear my last farewell.
Vent. [*aloud*]. It looked indeed
Like your farewell.
Ant. More softly.—My farewell?
What secret meaning have you in those words
Of—"My farewell?" He did it by my order.
Vent. [*aloud*]. Then he obeyed your order. I suppose
You bid him do it with all gentleness,
All kindness, and all——love.
Ant. How she mourned,
The poor forsaken creature!
Vent. She took it as she ought; she bore your parting
As she did Cæsar's, as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.
Ant. [*aloud*]. Thou dost belie her;
Most basely, and maliciously belie her.
Vent. I thought not to displease you; I have done.
Octav. [*coming up*]. You seemed disturbed, my lord.
Ant. A very trifle.
Retire, my love.
Vent. It was indeed a trifle.
He sent——
Ant. [*angrily*]. No more. Look how thou disobey'st me;
Thy life shall answer it.
Octav. Then 'tis no trifle.
Vent. [*to* Octav.]. 'Tis less; a very nothing: you too saw it,
As well as I, and therefore 'tis no secret.
Ant. She saw it!
Vent. Yes: she saw young Dolabella——
Ant. Young Dolabella!
Vent. Young, I think him young,
And handsome too; and so do others think him.
But what of that? He went by your command,
Indeed 'tis probable, with some kind message;
For she received it graciously; she smiled;
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeezed it, and worried it with ravenous kisses;
She blushed, and sighed, and smiled, and blushed again;
At last she took occasion to talk softly,
And brought her cheek up close, and leaned on his;
At which, he whispered kisses back on hers;
And then she cried aloud that constancy
Should be rewarded.
Octav. This I saw and heard.
Ant. What woman was it, whom you heard and saw
So playful with my friend? Not Cleopatra?
Vent. Even she, my lord.
Ant. My Cleopatra?
Vent. Your Cleopatra;
Dolabella's Cleopatra; every man's Cleopatra.
Ant. Thou liest.
Vent. I do not lie, my lord.
Is this so strange? Should mistresses be left,

And not provide against a time of change?
You know she's not much used to lonely nights.
Ant. I'll think no more on't.
I know 'tis false, and see the plot betwixt you.—
You needed not have gone this way, Octavia.
What harms it you that Cleopatra's just?
She's mine no more. I see, and I forgive:
Urge it no farther, love.
Octav. Are you concerned,
That she's found false?
Ant. I should be, were it so;
For, though 'tis past, I would not that the world
Should tax my former choice, that I loved one
Of so light note; but I forgive you both.
Vent. What has my age deserved, that you should think
I would abuse your ears with perjury?
If heaven be true, she's false.
Ant. Though heaven and earth
Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.
Vent. I'll bring you, then, a witness
From hell, to prove her so.—Nay, go not back;
[*Seeing* ALEXAS *just entering, and starting back.*
For stay you must and shall.
Alex. What means my lord?
Vent. To make you do what most you hate,—speak truth.
You are of Cleopatra's private counsel,
Of her bed-counsel, her lascivious hours;
Are conscious of each nightly change she makes,
And watch her, as Chaldæans do the moon,
Can tell what signs she passes through, what day.
Alex. My noble lord!
Vent. My most illustrious pander,
No fine set speech, no cadence, no turned periods,
But a plain homespun truth, is what I ask:
I did, myself, o'erhear your queen make love
To Dolabella. Speak; for I will know,
By your confession, what more passed betwixt 'em;
How near the business draws to your employment;
And when the happy hour.
Ant. Speak truth, Alexas; whether it offend
Or please Ventidius, care not. Justify
Thy injured queen from malice; dare his worst.
Octav. [*aside*]. See how he gives him courage! how he fears
To find her false! and shuts his eyes to truth,
Willing to be misled!
Alex. As far as love may plead for woman's frailty,
Urged by desert and greatness of the lover,
So far, divine Octavia, may my queen
Stand even excused to you for loving him
Who is your lord: so far, from brave Ventidius,
May her past actions hope a fair report.
Ant. 'Tis well, and truly spoken: mark, Ventidius.
Alex. To you, most noble emperor, her strong passion
Stands not excused, but wholly justified.
Her beauty's charms alone, without her crown,
From Ind and Meroe drew the distant vows
Of sighing kings; and at her feet were laid
The sceptres of the earth, exposed on heaps,
To choose where she would reign:
She thought a Roman only could deserve her,
And, of all Romans, only Antony;
And, to be less than wife to you, disdained
Their lawful passion.
Ant. 'Tis but truth.
Alex. And yet, though love, and your unmatched desert,
Have drawn her from the due regard of honor,
At last heaven opened her unwilling eyes
To see the wrongs she offered fair Octavia,
Whose holy bed she lawlessly usurped.
The sad effects of this improsperous war
Confirmed those pious thoughts.
Vent. [*aside*]. Oh, wheel you there?
Observe him now; the man begins to mend,
And talk substantial reason. Fear not, eunuch;
The emperor has given thee leave to speak.
Alex. Else had I never dared to offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urged
On my forsaken mistress; yet I must not
Presume to say, her heart is wholly altered.
Ant. No, dare not for thy life, I charge thee dare not
Pronounce that fatal word!
Octav. [*aside*]. Must I bear this? Good heaven, afford me patience.
Vent. On, sweet eunuch; my dear half-man, proceed.
Alex. Yet Dolabella
Has loved her long; he, next my god-like lord,
Deserves her best; and should she meet his passion,
Rejected, as she is, by him she loved——
Ant. Hence from my sight! for I can bear no more:
Let furies drag thee quick to hell; let all
The longer damned have rest; each torturing hand
Do thou employ, till Cleopatra comes;
Then join thou too, and help to torture her!
[*Exit* ALEXAS, *thrust out by* ANTONY.
Octav. 'Tis not well,
Indeed, my lord, 'tis much unkind to me,

To show this passion, this extreme concernment,
For an abandoned, faithless prostitute.
Ant. Octavia, leave me; I am much disordered:
Leave me, I say.
Octav. My lord!
Ant. I bid you leave me.
Vent. Obey him, madam; best withdraw a while,
And see how this will work.
Octav. Wherein have I offended you, my lord,
That I am bid to leave you? Am I false,
Or infamous? Am I a Cleopatra?
Were I she,
Base as she is, you would not bid me leave you;
But hang upon my neck, take slight excuses,
And fawn upon my falsehood.
Ant. 'Tis too much.
Too much, Octavia; I am pressed with sorrows
Too heavy to be borne; and you add more:
I would retire, and recollect what's left
Of man within, to aid me.
Octav. You would mourn,
In private, for your love, who has betrayed you.
You did but half return to me; your kindness
Lingered behind with her. I hear, my lord,
You make conditions for her,
And would include her treaty. Wondrous proofs
Of love to me!
Ant. Are you my friend, Ventidius?
Or are you turned a Dolabella too,
And let this Fury loose?
Vent. O, be advised,
Sweet madam, and retire.
Octav. Yes, I will go; but never to return.
You shall no more be haunted with this Fury.
My lord, my lord, love will not always last,
When urged with long unkindness and disdain:
Take her again, whom you prefer to me;
She stays but to be called. Poor cozened man!
Let a feigned parting give her back your heart,
Which a feigned love first got; for injured me,
Though my just sense of wrongs forbid my stay,
My duty shall be yours.
To the dear pledges of our former love
My tenderness and care shall be transferred,
And they shall cheer, by turns, my widowed nights:
So, take my last farewell; for I despair
To have you whole, and scorn to take you half. [*Exit.*

Vent. I combat heaven, which blasts my best designs:
My last attempt must be to win her back;
But O! I fear in vain. [*Exit.*
Ant. Why was I framed with this plain, honest heart,
Which knows not to disguise its griefs and weakness,
But bears its workings outward to the world?
I should have kept the mighty anguish in,
And forced a smile at Cleopatra's falsehood;
Octavia had believed it, and had stayed.
But I am made a shallow-forded stream,
Seen to the bottom: all my clearness scorned,
And all my faults exposed.—See where he comes,

Enter Dolabella.

Who has profaned the sacred name of friend,
And worn it into vileness!
With how secure a brow, and specious form,
He gilds the secret villain! Sure that face
Was meant for honesty; but heaven mismatched it,
And furnished treason out with nature's pomp,
To make its work more easy.
Dola. O my friend!
Ant. Well, Dolabella, you performed my message?
Dola. I did, unwillingly.
Ant. Unwillingly?
Was it so hard for you to bear our parting?
You should have wished it.
Dola. Why?
Ant. Because you love me.
And she received my message with as true,
With as unfeigned a sorrow as you brought it?
Dola. She loves you, even to madness.
Ant. O, I know it.
You, Dolabella, do not better know
How much she loves me. And should I
Forsake this beauty, this all-perfect creature?
Dola. I could not, were she mine.
Ant. And yet you first
Persuaded me: how come you altered since?
Dola. I said at first I was not fit to go;
I could not hear her sighs, and see her tears,
But pity must prevail; and so, perhaps,
It may again with you; for I have promised,
That she should take her last farewell; and, see,
She comes to claim my word.

Enter Cleopatra.

Ant. False Dolabella!
Dola. What's false, my lord?
Ant. Why, Dolabella's false,

And Cleopatra's false; both false and faithless.
Draw near, you well-joined wickedness, you serpents,
Whom I have in my kindly bosom warmed,
Till I am stung to death.
Dola. My lord, have I
Deserved to be thus used?
Cleo. Can heaven prepare
A newer torment? Can it find a curse
Beyond our separation?
Ant. Yes, if fate
Be just, much greater: heaven should be ingenious
In punishing such crimes. The rolling stone,
And gnawing vulture, were slight pains, invented
When Jove was young, and no examples known
Of mighty ills; but you have ripened sin,
To such a monstrous growth, 'twill pose the gods
To find an equal torture. Two, two such!—
O, there's no further name,—two such! to me,
To me, who locked my soul within your breasts,
Had no desires, no joys, no life, but you;
When half the globe was mine, I gave it you
In dowry with my heart; I had no use,
No fruit of all, but you; a friend and mistress
Was what the world could give. O Cleopatra!
O Dolabella! how could you betray
This tender heart, which with an infant fondness
Lay lulled betwixt your bosoms, and there slept,
Secure of injured faith?
Dola. If she has wronged you,
Heaven, hell, and you revenge it.
Ant. If she has wronged me!
Thou wouldst evade thy part of guilt; but swear
Thou lov'st not her.
Dola. Not so as I love you.
Ant. Not so? Swear, swear, I say, thou dost not love her.
Dola. No more than friendship will allow.
Ant. No more?
Friendship allows thee nothing; thou art perjured—
And yet thou didst not swear thou lov'st her not;
But not so much, no more. O trifling hypocrite,
Who dar'st not own to her, thou dost not love,
Nor own to me, thou dost! Ventidius heard it;
Octavia saw it.
Cleo. They are enemies.
Ant. Alexas is not so: he, he confessed it;
He, who, next hell, best knew it, he avowed it.
[*To* DOLA.] Why do I seek a proof beyond yourself?
You, whom I sent to bear my last farewell,
Returned, to plead her stay.
Dola. What shall I answer?
If to have loved be guilt, then I have sinned;
But if to have repented of that love
Can wash away my crime, I have repented.
Yet, if I have offended past forgiveness,
Let not her suffer; she is innocent.
Cleo. Ah, what will not a woman do, who loves?
What means will she refuse, to keep that heart,
Where all her joys are placed? 'Twas I encouraged,
'Twas I blew up the fire that scorched his soul,
To make you jealous, and by that regain you.
But all in vain; I could not counterfeit:
In spite of all the dams my love broke o'er
And drowned my heart again: fate took the occasion;
And thus one minute's feigning has destroyed
My whole life's truth.
Ant. Thin cobweb arts of falsehood;
Seen, and broke through at first.
Dola. Forgive your mistress.
Cleo. Forgive your friend.
Ant. You have convinced yourselves.
You plead each other's cause: what witness have you,
That you but meant to raise my jealousy?
Cleo. Ourselves, and heaven.
Ant. Guilt witnesses for guilt. Hence, love and friendship!
You have no longer place in human breasts,
These two have driven you out. Avoid my sight!
I would not kill the man whom I have loved,
And cannot hurt the woman; but avoid me:
I do not know how long I can be tame;
For, if I stay one minute more, to think
How I am wronged, my justice and revenge
Will cry so loud within me, that my pity
Will not be heard for either.
Dola. Heaven has but
Our sorrow for our sins; and then delights
To pardon erring man: sweet mercy seems
Its darling attribute, which limits justice;
As if there were degrees in infinite,
And infinite would rather want perfection,
Than punish to extent.
Ant. I can forgive
A foe; but not a mistress and a friend.
Treason is there in its most horrid shape,

Where trust is greatest; and the soul resigned,
Is stabbed by its own guards: I'll hear no more;
Hence from my sight for ever!
Cleo. How? for ever!
I cannot go one moment from your sight,
And must I go for ever?
My joys, my only joys, are centered here:
What place have I to go to? My own kingdom?
That I have lost for you. Or to the Romans?
They hate me for your sake. Or must I wander
The wide world o'er, a helpless, banished woman,
Banished for love of you; banished from you?
Ay, there's the banishment! O, hear me; hear me,
With strictest justice; for I beg no favor;
And if I have offended you, then kill me,
But do not banish me.
Ant. I must not hear you.
I have a fool within me takes your part;
But honor stops my ears.
Cleo. For pity hear me!
Would you cast off a slave who followed you?
Who crouched beneath your spurn?—He has no pity!
See, if he gives one tear to my departure;
One look, one kind farewell: O iron heart!
Let all the gods look down, and judge betwixt us,
If he did ever love!
Ant. No more; Alexas!
Dola. A perjured villain!
Ant. [*to* Cleo.]. Your Alexas; yours.
Cleo. Oh, 'twas his plot; his ruinous design,
To engage you in my love by jealousy.
Hear him; confront him with me; let him speak.
Ant. I have; I have.
Cleo. And if he clear me not——
Ant. Your creature! one, who hangs upon your smiles!
Watches your eye, to say or to unsay,
Whate'er you please! I am not to be moved.
Cleo. Then must we part? Farewell, my cruel lord!
The appearance is against me; and I go,
Unjustified, for ever from your sight.
How I have loved, you know; how yet I love,
My only comfort is, I know myself:
I love you more, even now you are unkind,
Than when you loved me most; so well, so truly
I'll never strive against it; but die pleased,
To think you once were mine.
Ant. Good heaven, they weep at parting!
Must I weep too? that calls 'em innocent.
I must not weep; and yet I must, to think
That I must not forgive.——
Live, but live wretched; 'tis but just you should,
Who made me so; live from each other's sight;
Let me not hear you meet. Set all the earth,
And all the seas, betwixt your sundered loves;
View nothing common but the sun and skies.
Now, all take several ways;
And each your own sad fate, with mine, deplore;
That you were false, and I could trust no more.
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V

Scene I

Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, *and* Iras.

Char. Be juster, heaven; such virtue punished thus,
Will make us think that chance rules all above,
And shuffles, with a random hand, the lots,
Which man is forced to draw.
Cleo. I could tear out these eyes, that gained his heart,
And had not power to keep it. O the curse
Of doting on, even when I find it dotage!
Bear witness, gods, you heard him bid me go;
You, whom he mocked with imprecating vows
Of promised faith!——I'll die; I will not bear it.
You may hold me——
[*She pulls out her dagger, and they hold her.*
But I can keep my breath; I can die inward,
And choke this love.

Enter Alexas.

Iras. Help, O Alexas, help!
The queen grows desperate; her soul struggles in her
With all the agonies of love and rage,
And strives to force its passage.
Cleo. Let me go.
Art thou there, traitor!—O,
O for a little breath, to vent my rage,
Give, give me way, and let me loose upon him.
Alex. Yes, I deserve it, for my ill-timed truth.
Was it for me to prop
The ruins of a falling majesty?
To place myself beneath the mighty flaw,
Thus to be crushed, and pounded into atoms,

By its o'erwhelming weight? 'Tis too presuming
For subjects to preserve that wilful power,
Which courts its own destruction.
Cleo. I would reason
More calmly with you. Did not you o'errule,
And force my plain, direct, and open love,
Into these crooked paths of jealousy?
Now, what's the event? Octavia is removed;
But Cleopatra's banished. Thou, thou villain,
Hast pushed my boat to open sea; to prove,
At my sad cost, if thou canst steer it back.
It cannot be; I'm lost too far; I'm ruined:
Hence, thou impostor, traitor, monster, devil!—
I can no more: thou, and my griefs, have sunk
Me down so low, that I want voice to curse thee.
Alex. Suppose some shipwrecked seaman near the shore,
Dropping and faint, with climbing up the cliff,
If, from above, some charitable hand
Pull him to safety, hazarding himself,
To draw the other's weight; would he look back,
And curse him for his pains? The case is yours;
But one step more, and you have gained the height.
Cleo. Sunk, never more to rise.
Alex. Octavia's gone, and Dolabella banished.
Believe me, madam, Antony is yours.
His heart was never lost, but started off
To jealousy, love's last retreat and covert;
Where it lies hid in shades, watchful in silence,
And listening for the sound that calls it back.
Some other, any man ('tis so advanced),
May perfect this unfinished work, which I
(Unhappy only to myself) have left
So easy to his hand.
Cleo. Look well thou do't; else——
Alex. Else, what your silence threatens.—Antony
Is mounted up the Pharos; from whose turret,
He stands surveying our Egyptian galleys,
Engaged with Cæsar's fleet. Now death or conquest!
If the first happen, fate acquits my promise;
If we o'ercome, the conqueror is yours.
[*A distant shout within.*
Char. Have comfort, madam: did you mark that shout? [*Second shout nearer.*
Iras. Hark! they redouble it.
Alex. 'Tis from the port.
The loudness shows it near: good news, kind heavens!
Cleo. Osiris make it so!

Enter SERAPION.

Serap. Where, where's the queen?
Alex. How frightfully the holy coward stares
As if not yet recovered of the assault,
When all his gods, and, what's more dear to him,
His offerings, were at stake.
Serap. O horror, horror!
Egypt has been; our latest hour has come:
The queen of nations, from her ancient seat,
Is sunk for ever in the dark abyss;
Time has unrolled her glories to the last,
And now closed up the volume.
Cleo. Be more plain:
Say, whence thou com'st; though fate is in thy face,
Which from thy haggard eyes looks wildly out,
And threatens ere thou speakest.
Serap. I came from Pharos;
From viewing (spare me, and imagine it)
Our land's last hope, your navy——
Cleo. Vanquished?
Serap. No:
They fought not.
Cleo. Then they fled.
Serap. Nor that. I saw,
With Antony, your well-appointed fleet
Row out; and thrice he waved his hand on high,
And thrice with cheerful cries they shouted back:
'Twas then false Fortune, like a fawning strumpet,
About to leave the bankrupt prodigal,
With a dissembled smile would kiss at parting,
And flatter to the last; the well-timed oars,
Now dipt from every bank, now smoothly run
To meet the foe; and soon indeed they met,
But not as foes. In few, we saw their caps
On either side thrown up; the Egyptian galleys,
Received like friends, passed through, and fell behind
The Roman rear; and now, they all come forward,
And ride within the port.
Cleo. Enough, Serapion:
I've heard my doom.—This needed not, you gods:
When I lost Antony, your work was done;
'Tis but superfluous malice.—Where's my lord?
How bears he this last blow?
Serap. His fury cannot be expressed by words:
Thrice he attempted headlong to have fallen
Full on his foes, and aimed at Cæsar's galley:
Withheld, he raves on you; cries, he's betrayed.

Should he now find you——
Alex. Shun him; seek your safety,
Till you can clear your innocence.
Cleo. I'll stay.
Alex. You must not; haste you to your monument,
While I make speed to Cæsar.
Cleo. Cæsar! No,
I have no business with him.
Alex. I can work him
To spare your life, and let this madman perish.
Cleo. Base fawning wretch! wouldst thou betray him too?
Hence from my sight! I will not hear a traitor;
'Twas thy design brought all this ruin on us.
Serapion, thou art honest; counsel me:
But haste, each moment's precious.
Serap. Retire; you must not yet see Antony.
He who began this mischief,
'Tis just he tempt the danger; let him clear you:
And, since he offered you his servile tongue,
To gain a poor precarious life from Cæsar,
Let him expose that fawning eloquence,
And speak to Antony.
Alex. O heavens! I dare not;
I meet my certain death.
Cleo. Slave, thou deserv'st it.—
Not that I fear my lord, will I avoid him;
I know him noble: when he banished me,
And thought me false, he scorned to take my life;
But I'll be justified, and then die with him.
Alex. O pity me, and let me follow you.
Cleo. To death, if thou stir hence. Speak, if thou canst,
Now for thy life, which basely thou wouldst save;
While mine I prize at—this! Come, good Serapion.
[*Exeunt* CLEOPATRA, SERAPION, CHARMION, IRAS.
Alex. O that I less could fear to lose this being,
Which, like a snowball in my coward hand,
The more 'tis grasped, the faster melts away.
Poor reason! what a wretched aid art thou!
For still, in spite of thee,
These two long lovers, soul and body, dread
Their final separation. Let me think:
What can I say, to save myself from death?
No matter what becomes of Cleopatra.
Ant. [*within*]. Which way? where?
Vent. [*within*]. This leads to the monument.
Alex. Ah me! I hear him; yet I'm unprepared:
My gift of lying's gone;
And this court-devil, which I so oft have raised,
Forsakes me at my need. I dare not stay;
Yet cannot far go hence. [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS.

Ant. O happy Cæsar! thou hast men to lead:
Think not 'tis thou hast conquered Antony;
But Rome has conquered Egypt. I'm betrayed.
Vent. Curse on this treacherous train!
Their soil and heaven infect them all with baseness:
And their young souls come tainted to the world
With the first breath they draw.
Ant. The original villain sure no god created;
He was a bastard of the sun, by Nile,
Aped into man; with all his mother's mud
Crusted about his soul.
Vent. The nation is
One universal traitor; and their queen
The very spirit and extract of them all.
Ant. Is there yet left
A possibility of aid from valor?
Is there one god unsworn to my destruction?
The least unmortgaged hope? for, if there be,
Methinks I cannot fall beneath the fate
Of such a boy as Cæsar.
The world's one half is yet in Antony;
And from each limb of it that's hewed away,
The soul comes back to me.
Vent. There yet remain
Three legions in the town. The last assault
Lopt off the rest; if death be your design,—
As I must wish it now—these are sufficient
To make a heap about us of dead foes,
An honest pile for burial.
Ant. They're enough.
We'll not divide our stars; but, side by side,
Fight emulous, and with malicious eyes
Survey each other's acts. So every death
Thou giv'st, I'll take on me, as a just debt,
And pay thee back a soul.
Vent. Now you shall see I love you. Not a word
Of chiding more. By my few hours of life,
I am so pleased with this brave Roman fate,
That I would not be Cæsar, to outlive you.
When we put off this flesh, and mount together,
I shall be shown to all the ethereal crowd,—
"Lo, this is he who died with Antony!"
Ant. Who knows, but we may pierce through all their troops,
And reach my veterans yet? 'tis worth the 'tempting,
To o'erleap this gulf of fate,
And leave our wandering destinies behind.

Enter ALEXAS, *trembling.*

Vent. See, see, that villain!

See Cleopatra stamped upon that face,
With all her cunning, all her arts of falsehood!
How she looks out through those dissembling eyes!
How he has set his countenance for deceit,
And promises a lie, before he speaks!
Let me despatch him first. [*Drawing.*
Alex. O spare me, spare me!
Ant. Hold; he's not worth your killing.—On thy life
(Which thou may'st keep, because I scorn to take it),
No syllable to justify thy queen;
Save thy base tongue its office.
Alex. Sir, she is gone,
Where she shall never be molested more
By love, or you.
Ant. Fled to her Dolabella!
Die, traitor! I revoke my promise! die!
[*Going to kill him.*
Alex. O hold! she is not fled.
Ant. She is: my eyes
Are open to her falsehood; my whole life
Has been a golden dream of love and friendship;
But, now I wake, I'm like a merchant, roused
From soft repose, to see his vessel sinking,
And all his wealth cast over. Ingrateful woman!
Who followed me, but as the swallow summer,
Hatching her young ones in my kindly beams,
Singing her flatteries to my morning wake:
But, now my winter comes, she spreads her wings,
And seeks the spring of Cæsar.
Alex. Think not so:
Her fortunes have, in all things, mixed with yours.
Had she betrayed her naval force to Rome,
How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
Secure by such a bribe!
Vent. She sent it first,
To be more welcome after.
Ant. 'Tis too plain;
Else would she have appeared, to clear herself.
Alex. Too fatally she has: she could not bear
To be accused by you; but shut herself
Within her monument; looked down and sighed;
While, from her unchanged face, the silent tears
Dropt, as they had not leave, but stole their parting.
Some undistinguished words she inly murmured;
At last, she raised her eyes; and, with such looks
As dying Lucrece cast——
Ant. My heart forebodes——
Vent. All for the best; go on.
Alex. She snatched her poniard,
And, ere we could prevent the fatal blow,
Plunged it within her breast; then turned to me:
"Go, bear my lord," said she, "my last farewell;
And ask him, if he yet suspect my faith."
More she was saying, but death rushed betwixt.
She half pronounced your name with her last breath,
And buried half within her.
Vent. Heaven be praised!
Ant. Then art thou innocent, my poor dear love,
And art thou dead?
O those two words! their sound should be divided:
Hadst thou been false, and died; or hadst thou lived,
And hadst been true.—But innocence and death!
This shows not well above. Then what am I,
The murderer of this truth, this innocence!
Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As can express my guilt!
Vent. Is't come to this? The gods have been too gracious;
And thus you thank 'em for't!
Ant. [*to* ALEX.]. Why stayest thou here?
Is it for thee to spy upon my soul,
And see its inward mourning? Get thee hence;
Thou art not worthy to behold, what now
Becomes a Roman emperor to perform.
Alex. [*aside*]. He loves her still:
His grief betrays it. Good! the joy to find
She's yet alive, completes the reconcilement.
I've saved myself, and her. But, oh! the Romans!
Fate comes too fast upon my wit,
Hunts me too hard, and meets me at each double. [*Exit.*
Vent. Would she had died a little sooner, though,
Before Octavia went! you might have treated:
Now 'twill look tame, and would not be received.
Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.
Ant. I will not fight: there's no more work for war.
The business of my angry hours is done.
Vent. Cæsar is at your gates.
Ant. Why, let him enter;
He's welcome now.
Vent. What lethargy has crept into your soul?

Ant. 'Tis but a scorn of life, and just desire
To free myself from bondage.
Vent. Do it bravely.
Ant. I will; but not by fighting. O Ventidius!
What should I fight for now? My queen is dead.
I was but great for her; my power, my empire,
Were but my merchandise to buy her love;
And conquered kings, my factors. Now she's dead,
Let Cæsar take the world,—
An empty circle, since the jewel's gone
Which made it worth my strife: my being's nauseous;
For all the bribes of life are gone away.
Vent. Would you be taken?
Ant. Yes, I would be taken;
But, as a Roman ought,—dead, my Ventidius:
For I'll convey my soul from Cæsar's reach,
And lay down life myself. 'Tis time the world
Should have a lord, and know whom to obey.
We two have kept its homage in suspense,
And bent the globe, on whose each side we trod,
Till it was dented inwards. Let him walk
Alone upon't: I'm weary of my part.
My torch is out; and the world stands before me,
Like a black desert at the approach of night:
I'll lay me down, and stray no farther on.
Vent. I could be grieved,
But that I'll not outlive you: choose your death;
For, I have seen him in such various shapes,
I care not which I take; I'm only troubled,
The life I bear is worn to such a rag,
'Tis scarce worth giving. I could wish, indeed,
We threw it from us with a better grace;
That, like two lions taken in the toils,
We might at last thrust out our paws, and wound
The hunters that inclose us.
Ant. I have thought on't.
Ventidius, you must live.
Vent. I must not, sir.
Ant. Wilt thou not live, to speak some good of me?
To stand by my fair fame, and guard the approaches
From the ill tongues of men?
Vent. Who shall guard mine,
For living after you?
Ant. Say, I command it.
Vent. If we die well, our deaths will speak themselves
And need no living witness.
Ant. Thou hast loved me.
And fain I would reward thee. I must die;
Kill me, and take the merit of my death,
To make thee friends with Cæsar.
Vent. Thank your kindness.
You said I loved you; and in recompense,
You bid me turn a traitor. Did I think
You would have used me thus?—that I should die
With a hard thought of you?
Ant. Forgive me, Roman.
Since I have heard of Cleopatra's death,
My reason bears no rule upon my tongue,
But lets my thoughts break all at random out.
I've thought better; do not deny me twice.
Vent. By Heaven I will not.
Let it not be to outlive you.
Ant. Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis but just thou serve
Thy friend, before thyself.
Vent. Give me your hand.
We soon shall meet again. Now, farewell, emperor!— [*Embrace.*
Methinks that word's too cold to be my last:
Since death sweeps all distinctions, farewell, friend!
That's all——
I will not make a business of a trifle;
And yet I cannot look on you, and kill you;
Pray turn your face.
Ant. I do: strike home, be sure.
Vent. Home as my sword will reach.
[*Kills himself.*
Ant. O, thou mistak'st;
That wound was none of thine; give it me back:
Thou robb'st me of my death.
Vent. I do indeed;
But think 'tis the first time I e'er deceived you,
If that may plead my pardon. And you, gods,
Forgive me, if you will; for I die perjured,
Rather than kill my friend. [*Dies.*
Ant. Farewell! Ever my leader, even in death!
My queen and thou have got the start of me,
And I'm the lag of honor.—Gone so soon?
Is Death no more? he used him carelessly,
With a familiar kindness; ere he knocked,
Ran to the door, and took him in his arms,
As who should say, "You're welcome at all hours,
A friend need give no warning." Books had spoiled him;
For all the learned are cowards by profession.
'Tis not worth
My farther thought; for death, for aught I know,
Is but to think no more. Here's to be satisfied. [*Falls on his sword.*
I've missed my heart. O unperforming hand!

Thou never couldst have erred in a worse time.
My fortune jades me to the last; and death,
Like a great man, takes state, and makes me wait
For my admittance.—— [*Trampling within.*
Some, perhaps, from Cæsar:
If he should find me living, and suspect
That I played booty with my life! I'll mend
My work, ere they can reach me.
[*Rises upon his knees.*

Enter Cleopatra, Charmion, Iras.

Cleo. Where is my lord? where is he?
Char. There he lies,
And dead Ventidius by him.
Cleo. My fears were prophets; I am come too late.
O that accursed Alexas! [*Runs to him.*
Ant. Art thou living?
Or am I dead before I knew, and thou
The first kind ghost that meets me?
Cleo. Help me seat him.
Send quickly, send for help!
[*They place him in a chair.*
Ant. I am answered.
We live both. Sit thee down, my Cleopatra:
I'll make the most I can of life, to stay
A moment more with thee.
Cleo. How is it with you?
Ant. 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all packed up,
But one dear jewel that his haste forgot;
And he, for that, returns upon the spur:
So I come back for thee.
Cleo. Too long, you heavens, you have been cruel to me:
Now show your mended faith, and give me back
His fleeting life!
Ant. It will not be, my love;
I keep my soul by force.
Say but, thou art not false.
Cleo. 'Tis now too late
To say I'm true: I'll prove it, and die with you.
Unknown to me, Alexas feigned my death;
Which, when I knew, I hasted to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betrayed
Both you and me.
Ant. And Dolabella——
Cleo. Scarce
Esteemed before he loved; but hated now.
Ant. Enough: my life's not long enough for more.
Thou say'st, thou wilt come after: I believe thee;
For I can now believe whate'er thou sayest,
That we may part more kindly.
Cleo. I will come:
Doubt not, my life, I'll come, and quickly too:
Cæsar shall triumph o'er no part of thee.
Ant. But grieve not, while thou stay'st,
My last disastrous times:
Think we have had a clear and glorious day
And heaven did kindly to delay the storm,
Just till our close of evening. Ten years' love,
And not a moment lost, but all improved
To the utmost joys,—what ages have we lived!
And now to die each other's; and, so dying,
While hand in hand we walk in groves below,
Whole troops of lovers' ghosts shall flock about us,
And all the train be ours.
Cleo. Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love?
Ant. No, not a minute.—This one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar. [*Dies.*
Cleo. O tell me so again,
And take ten thousand kisses for that word.
My lord, my lord! speak, if you yet have being;
Sign to me, if you cannot speak; or cast
One look! Do anything that shows you live.
Iras. He's gone too far to hear you;
And this you see, a lump of senseless clay,
The leavings of a soul.
Char. Remember, madam,
He charged you not to grieve.
Cleo. And I'll obey him.
I have not loved a Roman, not to know
What should become his wife; his wife, my Charmion!
For 'tis to that high title I aspire;
And now I'll not die less. Let dull Octavia
Survive, to mourn him dead; my nobler fate
Shall knit our spousals with a tie, too strong
For Roman laws to break.
Iras. Will you then die?
Cleo. Why shouldst thou make that question?
Iras. Cæsar is merciful.
Cleo. Let him be so
To those that want his mercy; my poor lord
Made no such covenant with him, to spare me
When he was dead. Yield me to Cæsar's pride?
What! to be led in triumph through the streets,
A spectacle to base plebeian eyes;
While some dejected friend of Antony's,
Close in a corner, shakes his head, and mutters
A secret curse on her who ruined him!
I'll none of that.
Char. Whatever you resolve,
I'll follow, even to death.
Iras. I only feared

For you; but more should fear to live without you.
Cleo. Why, now, 'tis as it should be. Quick, my friends,
Dispatch; ere this, the town's in Cæsar's hands:
My lord looks down concerned, and fears my stay,
Lest I should be surprised;
Keep him not waiting for his love too long.
You, Charmion, bring my crown and richest jewels;
With them, the wreath of victory I made
(Vain augury!) for him, who now lies dead:
You, Iras, bring the cure of all our ills.
Iras. The aspics, madam?
Cleo. Must I bid you twice?
[*Exeunt* Charmion *and* Iras.
'Tis sweet to die, when they would force life on me,
To rush into the dark abode of death,
And seize him first; if he be like my love,
He is not frightful, sure.
We're now alone, in secrecy and silence;
And is not this like lovers? I may kiss
These pale, cold lips; Octavia does not see me:
And, oh! 'tis better far to have him thus,
Than see him in her arms.—O, welcome, welcome!

Enter Charmion *and* Iras.

Char. What must be done?
Cleo. Short ceremony, friends;
But yet it must be decent. First, this laurel
Shall crown my hero's head: he fell not basely,
Nor left his shield behind him.—Only thou
Couldst triumph o'er thyself; and thou alone
Wert worthy so to triumph.
Char. To what end
These ensigns of your pomp and royalty?
Cleo. Dull that thou art! why, 'tis to meet my love;
As when I saw him first, on Cydnos' bank,
All sparkling, like a goddess: so adorned,
I'll find him once again; my second spousals
Shall match my first in glory. Haste, haste, both,
And dress the bride of Antony.
Char. 'Tis done.
Cleo. Now seat me by my lord. I claim this place;
For I must conquer Cæsar too, like him,
And win my share of the world.—Hail, you dear relics
Of my immortal love!
O let no impious hand remove you hence:
But rest for ever here! Let Egypt give
His death that peace, which it denied his life.—
Reach me the casket.
Iras. Underneath the fruit
The aspic lies.
Cleo. [*putting aside the leaves*]. Welcome, thou kind deceiver!
Thou best of thieves; who, with an easy key,
Dost open life, and, unperceived by us,
Even steal us from ourselves; discharging so
Death's dreadful office, better than himself;
Touching our limbs so gently into slumber,
That Death stands by, deceived by his own image,
And thinks himself but Sleep.
Serap. [*within*]. The queen, where is she?
The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.
Cleo. He comes too late to invade the rights of death
Haste, bare my arm, and rouse the serpent's fury.
[*Holds out her arm and draws it back.*
Coward flesh,
Wouldst thou conspire with Cæsar to betray me,
As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to it,
And not be sent by him,
But bring, myself, my soul to Antony.
[*Turns aside, and then shows her arm bloody.*
Take hence; the work is done.
Serap. [*within*]. Break ope the door,
And guard the traitor well.
Char. The next is ours.
Iras. Now, Charmion, to be worthy
Of our great queen and mistress.
[*They apply the aspics.*
Cleo. Already, death, I feel thee in my veins:
I go with such a will to find my lord,
That we shall quickly meet.
A heavy numbness creeps through every limb,
And now 'tis at my head; my eyelids fall,
And my dear love is vanished in a mist.
Where shall I find him, where? O turn me to him,
And lay me on his breast!—Cæsar, thy worst;
Now part us, if thou canst. [*Dies.*
[Iras *sinks down at her feet, and dies;* Charmion *stands behind her chair, as dressing her head.*

Enter Serapion, *two Priests,* Alexas *bound, Egyptians.*

Priest. Behold, Serapion,
What havoc death has made!
Serap. 'Twas what I feared.—
Charmion, is this well done?
Char. Yes, 'tis well done, and like a queen, the last
Of her great race: I follow her.
[*Sinks down: dies.*
Alex. 'Tis true,
She has done well: much better thus to die,

Than live to make a holiday in Rome.
Serap. See, see, how the lovers sit in state together,
As they were giving laws to half mankind!
The impression of a smile, left in her face,
Shows she died pleased with him for whom she lived,
And went to charm him in another world.
Cæsar's just entering: grief has now no leisure.
Secure that villain, as our pledge of safety,
To grace the imperial triumph. Sleep, blest pair,
Secure from human chance, long ages out,
While all the storms of fate fly o'er your tomb;
And fame to late posterity shall tell,
No lovers lived so great, or died so well.
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE

Poets, like disputants, when reasons fail,
Have one sure refuge left—and that's to rail.
Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thundered through the pit;
And this is all their equipage of wit.
We wonder how the devil this difference grows,
Betwixt our fools in verse, and yours in prose:
For, 'faith, the quarrel rightly understood,
'Tis civil war with their own flesh and blood.
The threadbare author hates the gaudy coat;
And swears at the gilt coach, but swears afoot:
For 'tis observed of every scribbling man,
He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can;
Prunes up, and asks his oracle, the glass,
If pink or purple best become his face.
For our poor wretch, he neither rails nor prays;
Nor likes your wit just as you like his plays;
He has not yet so much of Mr. Bayes.
He does his best; and if he cannot please,
Would quietly sue out his *writ of ease.*
Yet, if he might his own grand jury call,
By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
Let Cæsar's power the men's ambition move,
But grace you him who lost the world for love!
Yet if some antiquated lady say,
The last age is not copied in his play;
Heaven help the man who for that face must drudge,
Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
Let not the young and beauteous join with those;
For should you raise such numerous hosts of foes,
Young wits and sparks he to his aid must call;
'Tis more than one man's work to please you all.

WILLIAM WYCHERLEY

THE COUNTRY WIFE

William Wycherley's life, which extended from 1641 to 1715,[1] may be divided by his marriage in 1680 into two almost equal parts. In the earlier half he had the favor of the court, literary recognition, and a fair degree of prosperity. In the latter he was married to a morbidly jealous wife, who on her early death (to Wycherley a blessed relief) left him a lawsuit as a legacy; he was thrown into jail for debt and stayed there for some years forgotten by his former friends; he had intermittent periods of his former glory, though somewhat faded; and he published a volume of poems that brought him neither money nor reputation.

His father, Daniel Wycherley, being a stout royalist and a man of some wealth and importance in Shropshire, sent William at the age of fifteen to France for his education, since he did not wish the youngster to be contaminated by the puritanism of either university in those days of the Commonwealth. By great good luck, as he undoubtedly felt, he was drawn into the circle of the Marquise de Montausier, the brilliant daughter of the celebrated Mme. de Rambouillet. Here he remained for five years, becoming as a matter of course a Roman Catholic, and at the end of that time he was more a fine gentleman than a scholar. On his return to England in 1660 he was entered at Queen's College, Oxford, as a gentleman commoner and was denominated in the Bodleian Library as *philosophiæ studiosus*. He had already been admitted to the Inner Temple (November, 1659), of which his father was a member, but neither in philosophy nor in law did he make any progress. He, however, slipped back into his former Protestantism. He seems to have been present at some engagement in the second Dutch war, perhaps that in which the Duke of York defeated Opdam in 1665.

The success of his first play, *Love in a Wood* (1671) led by virtue of its lines,

> Great wits and great braves
> Have always a punk for their mother,—

[1] Howard P. Vincent, after examining a horoscope of Wycherley's nativity, finds that he was probably born on May 28, 1641. See *London Times Literary Supplement*, March 3, 1932.

to the extraordinary meeting with and the still more extraordinary greeting by the Duchess of Cleveland, one of Charles II's mistresses, and later to her customary favors. In his dedication of this play to her he let the world guess the nature of these favors. Then followed an acquaintance with her cousin, the Duke of Buckingham, an unsuccessful suitor for those same favors, and such was the charm of the one and the generosity of the other that they became good friends. He was next presented to the king, whose kindness lasted till Wycherley's marriage. His next play, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master,* was brought out in August, 1672, and if we may judge from the Prologue of *The Country Wife,* it was not successful. The latter play was produced at Drury Lane Theatre in January, 1675, and *The Plain-Dealer* in December of the next year.

It was *The Plain-Dealer* in published form that led directly to Wycherley's marriage, for when he was sauntering along one morning near a book-stall in Tunbridge Wells, a young matron of remarkable beauty asked the book-seller for a copy of the play. The Plain-Dealer, as Wycherley liked to call himself, made up to the lady, who happened to be the Countess of Drogheda, the temperamental wife of the mild and sickly Earl. The flirtation progressed at the Wells and was continued in London with the usual results. Meanwhile he grew in favor with the king, who sent him to Montpelier for his health in the fall of 1678. When he returned to England in the following year, the king made him tutor to the Duke of Richmond, his son by the Duchess of Portsmouth, at the munificent salary of £1500 a year. This was the high point in Wycherley's social career. Then came the news of the death of the Earl of Drogheda and the question of marriage with the widow. Wycherley's father urged his impecunious son to marry what he thought was a fortune but what was to prove an interminable lawsuit. Wycherley feared, not without reason, that if the king should hear of his marriage, he might deprive him of his newly bestowed tutorship. So it was agreed that they should marry secretly and hope for the best. But whispering tongues soon brought the news to Charles, and Wycherley ceased to be a member of the household of the Duchess of Portsmouth. And to make matters still worse his bride showed such a jealous and imperious nature that she forbade all further relation with the court. She even commanded that when he visited the Cock Tavern across the street from their lodgings, he sit within full view of her all the time so that she might see that he played with no minxes. Her tyranny, however, was of short duration, for she died toward the end of 1681, leaving her husband her entire fortune.

The second half of Wycherley's life was a pretty sad affair in contrast with the first. There were lawsuits and imprisonment for debt in Newgate and later Fleet prison over a period of five or six years. His hard-hearted old father saw William and another son, George, go to this same prison and he let them stay there, William till help came from another source and George till his death. It was through the generosity of James II that help came.

The king was much pleased by a performance of *The Plain-Dealer* and was led to pay the greater part of Wycherley's debts and to grant him an annuity of £200. Old Daniel Wycherley made up the difference between what William told the king he owed and what he actually owed. Let us give the old curmudgeon some credit. Wycherley came out of prison more or less of a physical wreck. He did what he could to show his gratitude to the king by returning to the Catholic faith. When the Revolution drove James out of the kingdom, Wycherley lost all royal patronage, and he was left poor and friendless. The only resource left him was retirement to his father's estate at Clive Hall in Shropshire, which was to him a sort of solitary confinement but at any rate not starvation. In the early years of the new century the clouds seemed to break, and we hear of occasional visits to London and of witty talk at Will's Coffee House with Dryden, Dennis, Congreve, and Walsh, and of the publication of his *Miscellany Poems* in 1704. Then there was the rather unhappy business of his connection with Pope, who corrected the old man's verses and won credit for himself. Wycherley's failing health took him to Bath to drink the waters, where he mingled in that strange society ruled over by Beau Brummel. But something near the end must yet be told, and we have that last scene of all which ends this strange eventful history.[2] Captain Thomas Shrimpton, a cousin of the dramatist, was determined that Wycherley should marry Shrimpton's mistress, Elizabeth Jackson, in order that she might inherit a part of Wycherley's estate. So Shrimpton bullied and cajoled and lied to Wycherley, he represented the old man's nephew and heir as avaricious and hostile, he threatened the poet with poverty and neglect if he would not yield, and at least he succeeded in bringing about this marriage practically on Wycherley's death bed,—and he saw to it that the marriage was legally consummated. The result was that Wycherley's debts were paid off and his wife received a jointure upon the estate of £500. Wycherley felt he was being forced into this marriage but he was too weak to resist. It is said that he called his bride to his bedside and entreated her not to deny his last request, that "you will never marry an old man again." She married Shrimpton three months after her husband's death. Wycherley died on December 31, 1715.

Love in a Wood established Wycherley's social reputation by attracting the Duchess of Cleveland twice to its performance and by occasioning her polite salute to him from her coach window, with its consequences, and it also set him on his dramatic career by showing him that he could handle character well, however poorly he managed his plot. The characters who occupy the stage during its three-hour traffic are of the good old Restoration breed: the young gentleman about town, whose life is a series of flirtations; Alderman Gripe, the type of the hated Puritan, who is caught in the toils of his own weaving when he thinks he can sin in private; the coxcomb, Sir

[2] Howard P. Vincent: "The Death of William Wycherley" in *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature,* Vol. 15 (1933).

Simon Addlepate, who is in constant pursuit of women of great fortune and who is such an ass that even the half-witted Dapperwit gets the better of him; Lady Flippant, who thinks the surest way to the paradise of marriage is through denial of all desire for marriage; and the ever-present bawds and other ladies of pleasure who were as familiar on the stage as on the street. The situations are amusing, though not interwoven with the skill of Wycherley's later workmanship; the credulity of the audience is stretched to the utmost in order that no comic effect may be lost; there is apparently no limit to the guilelessness of Addlepot nor to the silliness of Dapperwit. The satirical element is implicit rather than explicit, for it would seem that the dramatist was more concerned to present life as he saw it than to reform it. It is doubtful if he had any moral purpose in showing the frustration of Gripe in the lively scene where the two bawds have him completely in their power.

The plot of *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* has more unity but not much more interest than that of *Love in a Wood.* Somewhat the same devices are used in both plays: Monsieur de Paris, the betrothed of the heroine, introduces Gerrard, his future rival, to the heroine, Hippolita; Gerrard in order that he may carry on his love affair with Hippolita assumes the rôle of a dancing-master and so hoodwinks her father; in the end when the bluff is discovered, Paris thinking he must defend the lovers for his share in the intrigue, thrusts them into a room with a priest, and when he has finished his defence, he finds they are nicely married. Like Gripe in the earlier play he consoles himself with Flirt, a woman of the town, though unlike his Puritan fellow-sufferer he makes nothing by it. The main interest of the play—and in this respect it is as farcical as the dancing-master scenes—was (rather than "is") in the fun poked at the French and Spanish affectations of, respectively, the betrothed and the father of the heroine. An Englishman with foreign affectations has always been a subject for comedy. Here it degenerates into farce by the clash of the two affectations with each other and of each with the genuinely English characters. Furthermore, this business has very little to do with the main action of the dancing-master. The audience, however, would get an added joy out of seeing any one made a fool of who had not sense enough to be an Englishman but must, forsooth, affect the manners of a Frenchman or a Spaniard. The satire implicit in these scenes is much like that in *Love in a Wood* and has very little thought of reforming manners or morals.

There are two pieces of external evidence for fixing the date of *The Country Wife,* each contradicting the other. One is a bit of gossip from Spence's *Anecdotes,* in which Pope remarked that Wycherley gave him the dates of his plays, all much earlier, we now know, than they could have been, and he placed *The Country Wife* after *The Plain-Dealer.* The other is that a character in the former play mentions having witnessed a performance in the latter, from which fact one would place *The Country Wife* first. Those who believe Pope and through him Wycherley dispose of this evidence

by treating it as a later insertion, though without any authority. When we realize how sadly Wycherley's memory failed him in his old age and how little Pope could be depended upon when personalities were involved, to say nothing of the patent inaccuracy of the dates, there seems no reason for not accepting the second piece of evidence at its face value and regarding *The Country Wife* as the earlier play. This conclusion seems to be borne out by the internal evidence furnished by the artistic quality of the plays themselves, as will appear later.

The device by which Horner accomplishes his nefarious purposes is borrowed from the *Eunuchus* of Terence; the Pinchwife episodes are a combination of Molière's *L'Ecole des Maris* and *L'Ecole des Femmes*. In both of Molière's plays a woman is shut up by her would-be husband that she may not get into trouble. In the former the imprisoned lady sends a message to her lover through the medium of the expectant husband and she also has this same man take her to her lover under the impression that she is some one else. In the other play Agnes makes an innocent confession to Arnolphe of her lover's stratagems such as Mrs. Pinchwife does, though not quite so innocently, to her husband. So completely, however, has Wycherley made these borrowings his own and so effectively has he merged them into the spirit of the play that he cannot be accused of either plagiarism or imitation.

The central idea of the play has to do with possessiveness or jealousy. In its extreme form Pinchwife has married a young unsophisticated country girl in order that she may be his absolute possession, as Horner puts it, "you only married to keep a whore to yourself." In its negative form the silly ass Sparkish is apparently so free from jealousy that he lets his rival make love to his betrothed under his very nose till he is made to believe that his Alithea is false, whereupon he flies off in a rage and gives her a reason for leaving him and marrying the rival. In between is Sir Jasper Fidget, who gives his wife free range with Horner since the poor man is sexually harmless. Now all these elements in the play are held together by Horner, who has the report spread abroad that he is a eunuch. As such he associates freely with the Fidgets and Squeamishes, he meets Mrs. Pinchwife, and Sparkish is made to believe that Alithea is in love with him.

Pinchwife has brought his country wife to town and plunges into danger by taking her to the play. In fact, every move by Pinchwife is a bad one and gets him into more and more trouble. At the play she is enchanted with the actors, and what is worse she is observed by the merry villain of the piece, Horner. Pinchwife, like a fool, tells her so and thinks he would thereby dissuade her from more plays. When she insists that she will go out walking, Pinchwife dresses her like a boy and thus gives Horner an opportunity that cannot be refused without undesirable revelations. All this to the impotent jealousy of the husband and the delight of the audience. Then Pinchwife shows her what may be done by means of letters and she goes him one better by making him the bearer of her substitute letter for his insulting

one to her lover. When she is discovered later writing another letter to Horner, she gets out of the difficulty by consulting her maid and pretending, on her advice, that she was doing all this for Alithea. And here the Alithea-Sparkish-Harcourt plot is linked up with the Horner-Margery affair. Then with the further help of the maid she has her husband convey her disguised as Alithea to Horner's lodgings, and what happens there is revealed in her naïve denials of her lover's reported condition. Later she falls in with the lies of the town ladies and assures her husband that all is well.

The argument put forth by Miss Todd-Naylor [3] that Margery is a sort of Restoration-comedy Desdemona is a far remove from Macaulay's caustic condemnation of the lady and, I should say, from Wycherley's intent in creating her. She is enraptured with the attention she receives from this fine young gallant and is not going to miss the least thrill in her new experience. It seems much more in keeping with Wycherley's comic spirit to show that "a natural instinct will teach the most untaught country wife to put horns on her husband as expeditiously as the varnished city madam" [4] than to depict a loving, simple soul who forgets all in her loyalty to her lover. At any rate, she sheds no tears when she realizes she has to go back to the country with her "musty husband."

The three-cornered affair of Sparkish, Alithea, and Harcourt furnishes the only decent character and the silliest one in the whole play. The audience do not wish that Alithea should marry Sparkish, who is such an utter fool, and they are interested when they see her virtue coming into conflict with her developing love for Harcourt. The explosion that follows when this material comes into contact with the dangerous Horner-Pinchwife matter disposes of Sparkish and gives Harcourt a better wife than he deserves.

The incidental matter of the Fidgets and the Squeamishes is sheer comedy that plays about Horner's supposedly sad state. There is no jealousy, no possessiveness here, since the possessors of these fine ladies are assured that the one person who might rob them of their precious honor cannot. The cream of the jest is that by this very assurance their honor is preserved at the expense of what they perhaps call their virtue. They correspond to the scandalous ladies in Sheridan's play. In these episodes more than anywhere else satire gets in its most perfect work. This eternal prating about honor is really diverting satire when one considers the delectable immorality of these city madams. Here is no fierce indignation at the way of the world; Wycherley and his audience laughed loud and long at these respectable upholders of the sanctity of the home.

The "purer" taste of the eighteenth century transformed *The Country Wife* into *The Country Girl* under the guiding revision of Garrick in 1766

[3] *The Country Wife,* edited by Ursula Todd-Naylor in "Smith College Studies in Modern Languages," Vol. XII, Nos. 1, 2, 3.

[4] Harold N. Hillebrand's review of the Todd-Naylor edition in *J. E. G. P.* XXXI (1932), pp. 605-6.

and left it a poor insipid thing, very moral and very dull; but this same taste joined to dramatic genius took a theme in essentials very similar and produced *The School for Scandal.* Here we have the older man and the young wife from the country, whom he would like to restrict in her freedom to move in the corrupt society of the town, the young rake, who instead of proclaiming himself as suffering from a physical infirmity moves about in an odor of "morality" and comes into perilous intimacy with the young wife in the celebrated screen scene. From this danger she is saved by several happy coincidences so that she and her husband live henceforth in the happiness of mutual understanding. The liveliness of the comic spirit is preserved and the peculiarly Restoration flavor is suggested without the use of any physiological misfortunes.

The stylistic reason for putting *The Plain-Dealer* after *The Country Wife* is that the satirical element, which in the latter play and its predecessors is incidental and implicit, is in this play intense and explicit. It justifies the criticism of Evelyn,—

> As long as men are false and women vain,
> Whilst gold continues to be virtue's bane,
> In pointed satire Wycherley shall reign,—

and Dryden's line about

> The satire, wit, and strength of manly Wycherley.

The play marks a departure in purpose from the genuine comic spirit that characterized *The Country Wife,* in which the persons and the incidents fit into a dramatic harmony, to a mordant satire in which artistic balance is lost in moral indignation at a corrupt world. It harks back to Molière's *Misanthrope* for its main plot and to Shakspere's *Twelfth Night* for the part of Fidelia, and it looks forward to parts of *She Stoops to Conquer.* It lacks the urbanity of the French play and the singleness of purpose of its immediate predecessor. Manly as a satiric figure takes in too great a sweep of human iniquity for perfect dramatic unity, in contrast with Horner, who, in so far as he may be regarded at all as a satiric creation, concentrated the dramatist's satire on petty sexual jealousy. Furthermore, the conduct of Fidelia spoils the comic spirit since Manly's treatment of her verges on the tragic, as does also the betrayal of Manly by the lascivious Olivia. The satire directed against the chicaneries of the law as presented in the Widow Blackacre, which might well be reminiscent of Wycherley's father's constant litigation and prophetic of his own lawsuits which he inherited from his wife, is extraneous to the main action of the play. Nevertheless the lady and her son are delightful anticipations of Mrs. Hardcastle and Tony, and they do not suffer in the comparison. In fact the characters are a precious lot of Restoration rascals, with the sole exception of the patient Fidelia, and they quite preserve the tone that brought down the wrath of Collier upon the heads of the whole theatrical fraternity.

THE COUNTRY WIFE

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. HART

POETS, like cudgelled bullies, never do
At first or second blow submit to you;
But will provoke you still, and ne'er have done,
Till you are weary first with laying on.
The late so baffled scribbler of this day,
Though he stands trembling, bids me boldly say,
What we before most plays are used to do,
For poets out of fear first draw on you;
In a fierce prologue the still pit defy,
And, ere you speak, like Castril give the lie.
But though our Bayes's battles oft I've fought,
And with bruised knuckles their dear conquests bought;
Nay, never yet feared odds upon the stage,
In prologue dare not hector with the age;
But would take quarter from your saving hands,
Though Bayes within all yielding countermands,
Says you confederate wits no quarter give,
Therefore his play shan't ask your leave to live.
Well, let the vain rash fop, by huffing so,
Think to obtain the better terms of you;
But we, the actors, humbly will submit,
Now, and at any time, to a full pit;
Nay, often we anticipate your rage,
And murder poets for you on our stage:
We set no guards upon our tiring-room,
But when with flying colors there you come,
We patiently, you see, give up to you
Our poets, virgins, nay, our matrons too.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MR. HORNER.
MR. HARCOURT.
MR. DORILANT.
MR. PINCHWIFE.
MR. SPARKISH.
SIR JASPER FIDGET.
A Boy.
A Quack.

Waiters, Servants, and Attendants.
MRS. MARGERY PINCHWIFE.
MRS. ALITHEA, *Sister of Pinchwife.*
LADY FIDGET.
MRS. DAINTY FIDGET, *Sister of Sir Jasper.*
MRS. SQUEAMISH.
OLD LADY SQUEAMISH.
LUCY, *Alithea's Maid.*

SCENE—LONDON.

ACT I

SCENE I

HORNER'S *Lodging.*

Enter HORNER, *and* QUACK *following him at a distance.*

Horn. [*aside*]. A quack is as fit for a pimp, as a midwife for a bawd; they are still but in their way, both helpers of nature.—[*Aloud.*] Well, my dear doctor, hast thou done what I desired?

Quack. I have undone you for ever with the women, and reported you throughout the whole town as bad as an eunuch, with as much trouble as if I had made you one in earnest.

Horn. But have you told all the midwives you know, the orange wenches at the playhouses, the city husbands, and old fumbling keepers of this end of the town, for they'll be the readiest to report it?

Quack. I have told all the chambermaids, waiting-women, tire-women, and old women of my acquaintance; nay, and whispered it as a secret to 'em, and to the whisperers of Whitehall; so that you need not doubt 'twill spread, and you will be as odious to the handsome young women as——

Horn. As the small-pox. Well——

Quack. And to the married women of this end of the town, as——

Horn. As the great ones; nay, as their own husbands.

Quack. And to the city dames, as aniseed Robin, of filthy and contemptible memory; and they will frighten their children with your name, especially their females.

Horn. And cry, Horner's coming to carry you away. I am only afraid 'twill not be believed. You told 'em it was by an English-French disaster, and an English-French chirurgeon, who has given me at once not only a cure, but an antidote for the future against that damned malady, and that worse distemper, love, and all other women's evils?

Quack. Your late journey into France has made it the more credible, and your being here a fortnight before you appeared in public, looks as if you apprehended the shame, which I wonder you do not. Well, I have been hired by young gallants to belie 'em t'other way; but you are the first would be thought a man unfit for women.

Horn. Dear Mr. Doctor, let vain rogues be contented only to be thought abler men than they are, generally 'tis all the pleasure they have; but mine lies another way.

Quack. You take, methinks, a very preposterous way to it, and as ridiculous as if we operators in physic should put forth bills to disparage our medicaments, with hopes to gain customers.

Horn. Doctor, there are quacks in love as well as physic, who get but the fewer and worse patients for their boasting; a good name is seldom got by giving it one's self; and women no more than honor are compassed by bragging. Come, come, Doctor, the wisest lawyer never discovers the merits of his cause till the trial; the wealthiest man conceals his riches, and the cunning gamester his play. Shy husbands and keepers, like old rooks, are not to be cheated but by a new unpractised trick: false friendship will pass now no more than false dice upon 'em; no, not in the city.

Enter Boy.

Boy. There are two ladies and a gentleman coming up. [*Exit.*

Horn. A pox! some unbelieving sisters of my former acquaintance, who, I am afraid, expect their sense should be satisfied of the falsity of the report. No—this formal fool and women!

Enter SIR JASPER FIDGET, LADY FIDGET, *and* MRS. DAINTY FIDGET.

Quack. His wife and sister.

Sir Jasp. My coach breaking just now before your door, sir, I look upon as an occasional reprimand to me, sir, for not kissing your hands, sir, since your coming out of France, sir; and so my disaster, sir, has been my good fortune, sir; and this is my wife and sister, sir.

Horn. What then, sir?

Sir Jasp. My lady, and sister, sir.—Wife, this is Master Horner.

Lady Fid. Master Horner, husband!

Sir Jasp. My lady, my Lady Fidget, sir.

Horn. So, sir.

Sir Jasp. Won't you be acquainted with her, sir?—[*Aside.*] So, the report is true, I find, by his coldness or aversion to the sex; but I'll play the wag with him.—[*Aloud.*] Pray salute my wife, my lady, sir.

Horn. I will kiss no man's wife, sir, for him, sir; I have taken my eternal leave, sir, of the sex already, sir.

Sir Jasp. [*aside*]. Ha! ha! ha! I'll plague him yet.—[*Aloud.*] Not know my wife, sir?

Horn. I do know your wife, sir; she's a woman, sir, and consequently a monster, sir, a greater monster than a husband, sir.

Sir Jasp. A husband! how, sir?

Horn. So, sir; but I make no more cuckolds, sir. [*Makes horns.*

Sir Jasp. Ha! ha! ha! Mercury! Mercury!

Lady Fid. Pray, Sir Jasper, let us be gone from this rude fellow.

Mrs. Dain. Who, by his breeding, would think he had ever been in France?

Lady Fid. Foh! he's but too much a French fellow, such as hate women of qual-

ity and virtue for their love to their husbands, Sir Jasper; a woman is hated by 'em as much for loving her husband as for loving their money. But pray, let's be gone.

Horn. You do well, madam, for I have nothing that you came for: I have brought over not so much as a bawdy picture, no new postures, nor the second part of the *Escole des Filles;* nor——

Quack. Hold, for shame, sir! what d'ye mean? You will ruin yourself for ever with the sex—— [*Apart to* Horner.

Sir Jasp. Ha! ha! ha! he hates women perfectly, I find.

Mrs. Dain. What pity 'tis he should!

Lady Fid. Ay, he's a base rude fellow for't. But affectation makes not a woman more odious to them than virtue.

Horn. Because your virtue is your greatest affectation, madam.

Lady Fid. How, you saucy fellow! would you wrong my honor?

Horn. If I could.

Lady Fid. How d'ye mean, sir?

Sir Jasp. Ha! ha! ha! no, he can't wrong your ladyship's honor, upon my honor; he, poor man—hark you in your ear—a mere eunuch.

Lady Fid. O filthy French beast! foh! foh! why do we stay? let's be gone: I can't endure the sight of him.

Sir Jasp. Stay but till the chairs come; they'll be here presently.

Lady Fid. No, no.

Sir Jasp. Nor can I stay longer. 'Tis—let me see, a quarter and half quarter of a minute past eleven. The council will be sat; I must away. Business must be preferred always before love and ceremony with the wise, Mr. Horner.

Horn. And the impotent, Sir Jasper.

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, the impotent, Master Horner; hah! hah! hah!

Lady Fid. What, leave us with a filthy man alone in his lodgings?

Sir Jasp. He's an innocent man now, you know. Pray stay, I'll hasten the chairs to you.—Mr. Horner, your servant; I should be glad to see you at my house. Pray come and dine with me, and play at cards with my wife after dinner; you are fit for women at that game yet, ha! ha!—[*Aside.*] 'Tis as much a husband's prudence to provide innocent diversion for a wife as to hinder her unlawful pleasures; and he had better employ her than let her employ herself. —[*Aloud.*] Farewell.

Horn. Your servant, Sir Jasper.

[*Exit* Sir Jasper.

Lady Fid. I will not stay with him, foh!——

Horn. Nay, madam, I beseech you stay, if it be but to see I can be as civil to ladies yet as they would desire.

Lady Fid. No, no, foh! you cannot be civil to ladies.

Mrs. Dain. You as civil as ladies would desire?

Lady Fid. No, no, no, foh! foh! foh!

[*Exeunt* Lady Fidget *and* Mrs. Dainty Fidget.

Quack. Now, I think, I, or you yourself, rather, have done your business with the women.

Horn. Thou art an ass. Don't you see already, upon the report and my carriage, this grave man of business leaves his wife in my lodgings, invites me to his house and wife, who before would not be acquainted with me out of jealousy?

Quack. Nay, by this means you may be the more acquainted with the husbands, but the less with the wives.

Horn. Let me alone; if I can but abuse the husbands, I'll soon disabuse the wives. Stay—I'll reckon you up the advantages I am like to have by my stratagem. First, I shall be rid of all my old acquaintances, the most insatiable sort of duns, that invade our lodgings in a morning; and next to the pleasure of making a new mistress is that of being rid of an old one, and of all old debts. Love, when it comes to be so, is paid the most unwillingly.

Quack. Well, you may be so rid of your old acquaintances; but how will you get any new ones?

Horn. Doctor, thou wilt never make a good chemist, thou art so incredulous and impatient. Ask but all the young fellows of the town if they do not lose more time, like huntsmen, in starting the game, than in running it down. One knows not where to find 'em, who will or will not. Women of quality are so civil, you can hardly distinguish love from good breeding, and a man is often mistaken: but now I can be sure she that shows an aversion to me loves the sport, as those women that are gone, whom I warrant to be right. And then the next thing is, your women of honor, as you call 'em, are only chary of their reputations, not their persons; and 'tis scandal they would avoid, not men. Now may I have, by the reputation of an eunuch, the privileges of one, and be seen in a lady's chamber in a morning as early as her husband; kiss virgins before their parents or lovers; and may be, in short, the *passe-partout* of the town. Now, doctor.

Quack. Nay, now you shall be the doctor; and your process is so new that we do not know but it may succeed.

Horn. Not so new neither; *probatum est,* doctor.

Quack. Well, I wish you luck, and many patients, whilst I go to mine. [*Exit.*

Enter Harcourt *and* Dorilant *to* Horner.

Har. Come, your appearance at the play yesterday has, I hope, hardened you for the future against the women's contempt and the men's raillery; and now you'll abroad as you were wont.

Horn. Did I not bear it bravely?

Dor. With a most theatrical impudence, nay, more than the orange-wenches show there, or a drunken vizard-mask, or a great-bellied actress; nay, or the most impudent of creatures, an ill poet; or what is yet more impudent, a second-hand critic.

Horn. But what say the ladies? have they no pity?

Har. What ladies? The vizard-masks, you know, never pity a man when all's gone, though in their service.

Dor. And for the women in the boxes, you'd never pity them when 'twas in your power.

Har. They say 'tis pity but all that deal with common women should be served so.

Dor. Nay, I dare swear they won't admit you to play at cards with them, go to plays with 'em, or do the little duties which other shadows of men are wont to do for 'em.

Horn. What do you call shadows of men?

Dor. Half-men.

Horn. What, boys?

Dor. Ay, your old boys, old *beaux garçons*, who, like superannuated stallions, are suffered to run, feed, and whinny with the mares as long as they live, though they can do nothing else.

Horn. Well, a pox on love and wenching! Women serve but to keep a man from better company. Though I can't enjoy them, I shall you the more. Good fellowship and friendship are lasting, rational, and manly pleasures.

Har. For all that, give me some of those pleasures you call effeminate too; they help to relish one another.

Horn. They disturb one another.

Har. No, mistresses are like books. If you pore upon them too much, they doze you, and make you unfit for company; but if used discreetly, you are the fitter for conversation by 'em.

Dor. A mistress should be like a little country retreat near the town; not to dwell in constantly, but only for a night and away, to taste the town the better when a man returns.

Horn. I tell you, 'tis as hard to be a good fellow, a good friend, and a lover of women, as 'tis to be a good fellow, a good friend, and a lover of money. You cannot follow both, then choose your side. Wine gives you liberty, love takes it away.

Dor. Gad, he's in the right on't.

Horn. Wine gives you joy; love, grief and tortures, besides the surgeon's. Wine makes us witty; love, only sots. Wine makes us sleep; love breaks it.

Dor. By the world, he has reason, Harcourt.

Horn. Wine makes——

Dor. Ay, wine makes us—makes us princes; love makes us beggars, poor rogues, egad—and wine——

Horn. So, there's one converted.—No, no, love and wine, oil and vinegar.

Har. I grant it; love will still be uppermost.

Horn. Come, for my part, I will have only those glorious manly pleasures of being very drunk and very slovenly.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mr. Sparkish is below, sir. [*Exit.*

Har. What, my dear friend! a rogue that is fond of me only, I think, for abusing him.

Dor. No, he can no more think the men laugh at him than that women jilt him, his opinion of himself is so good.

Horn. Well, there's another pleasure by drinking I thought not of,—I shall lose his acquaintance, because he cannot drink: and you know 'tis a very hard thing to be rid of him; for he's one of those nauseous offerers at wit, who, like the worst fiddlers, run themselves into all companies.

Har. One that, by being in the company of men of sense, would pass for one.

Horn. And may so to the short-sighted world, as a false jewel amongst true ones is not discerned at a distance. His company is as troublesome to us as a cuckold's when you have a mind to his wife's.

Har. No, the rogue will not let us enjoy one another, but ravishes our conversation, though he signifies no more to't than Sir Martin Mar-all's gaping, and awkward thrumming upon the lute, does to his man's voice and music.

Dor. And to pass for a wit in town shows himself a fool every night to us, that are guilty of the plot.

Horn. Such wits as he are, to a company of reasonable men, like rooks to the gamesters, who only fill a room at the table, but are so far from contributing to the play, that they only serve to spoil the fancy of those that do.

Dor. Nay, they are used like rooks too, snubbed, checked, and abused; yet the rogues will hang on.

Horn. A pox on 'em, and all that force nature, and would be still what she forbids 'em! Affectation is her greatest monster.

Har. Most men are the contraries to that they would seem. Your bully, you see, is a coward with a long sword; the little humbly-fawning physician, with his ebony cane, is he that destroys men.

Dor. The usurer, a poor rogue, possessed of mouldy bonds and mortgages; and we they call spendthrifts, are only wealthy, who lay out his money upon daily new purchases of pleasure.

Horn. Ay, your errantest cheat is your trustee or executor; your jealous man, the greatest cuckold; your churchman the greatest atheist; and your noisy pert rogue of a wit, the greatest fop, dullest ass, and worst company, as you shall see; for here he comes.

Enter Sparkish.

Spark. How is't, sparks? how is't? Well, faith, Harry, I must rally thee a little, ha! ha! ha! upon the report in town of thee, ha! ha! ha! I can't hold i'faith; shall I speak?

Horn. Yes; but you'll be so bitter then.

Spark. Honest Dick and Frank here shall answer for me, I will not be extreme bitter, by the universe.

Har. We will be bound in a ten thousand pound bond, he shall not be bitter at all.

Dor. Nor sharp, nor sweet.

Horn. What, not downright insipid?

Spark. Nay then, since you are so brisk, and provoke me, take what follows. You must know, I was discoursing and rallying with some ladies yesterday, and they happened to talk of the fine new signs in town.

Horn. Very fine ladies, I believe.

Spark. Said I, I know where the best new sign is.—Where? says one of the ladies.—In Covent Garden, I replied.—Said another, In what street?—In Russel Street, answered I. —Lord, says another, I'm sure there was ne'er a fine new sign there yesterday.—Yes, but there was, said I again, and it came out of France, and has been there a fortnight.

Dor. A pox! I can hear no more, prithee.

Horn. No, hear him out; let him tune his crowd a while.

Har. The worst music, the greatest preparation.

Spark. Nay, faith, I'll make you laugh.—It cannot be, says a third lady.—Yes, yes, quoth I again.—Says a fourth lady——

Horn. Look to't, we'll have no more ladies.

Spark. No—then mark, mark, now. Said I to the fourth, Did you never see Mr. Horner? he lodges in Russel Street, and he's a sign of a man, you know, since he came out of France; ha! ha! ha!

Horn. But the devil take me if thine be the sign of a jest.

Spark. With that they all fell a-laughing, till they bepissed themselves. What, but it does not move you, methinks? Well, I see one had as good go to law without a witness, as break a jest without a laughter on one's side.—Come, come, sparks, but where do we dine? I have left at Whitehall an earl to dine with you.

Dor. Why, I thought thou hadst loved a man with a title, better than a suit with a French trimming to't.

Har. Go to him again.

Spark. No, sir, a wit to me is the greatest title in the world.

Horn. But go dine with your earl, sir; he may be exceptious. We are your friends, and will not take it ill to be left, I do assure you.

Har. Nay, faith, he shall go to him.

Spark. Nay, pray, gentlemen.

Dor. We'll thrust you out, if you won't; what, disappoint anybody for us?

Spark. Nay, dear gentlemen, hear me.

Horn. No, no, sir, by no means; pray go, sir.

Spark. Why, dear rogues——

Dor. No, no.

[*They all thrust him out of the room.*

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Re-enter Sparkish.

Spark. But, sparks, pray hear me. What, d'ye think I'll eat then with gay shallow fops and silent coxcombs? I think wit as necessary at dinner as a glass of good wine; and that's the reason I never have any stomach when I eat alone.—Come, but where do we dine?

Horn. Even where you will.

Spark. At Chateline's?

Dor. Yes, if you will.

Spark. Or at the Cock?

Dor. Yes, if you please.

Spark. Or at the Dog and Partridge?

Horn. Ay, if you have a mind to't; for we shall dine at neither.

Spark. Pshaw; with your fooling we shall lose the new play; and I would no more miss seeing a new play the first day, than I would miss sitting in the wits' row. Therefore I'll go fetch my mistress, and away. [*Exit.*

Manent Horner, Harcourt, Doriland: *enter to them* Mr. Pinchwife.

Horn. Who have we here? Pinchwife?

Pinch. Gentlemen, your humble servant.

Horn. Well, Jack, by thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy, should I not, of marriage?

Pinch. [*aside*]. Death! does he know I'm married too? I thought to have concealed it from him at least.—[*Aloud.*] My long stay in the country will excuse my dress; and I have a suit of law that brings me up to town, that puts me out of humor. Besides, I must give Sparkish to-morrow five thousand pound to lie with my sister.

Horn. Nay, you country gentlemen, rather than not purchase, will buy anything; and he is a cracked title, if we may quibble.

Well, but am I to give thee joy? I heard thou wert married.

Pinch. What then?

Horn. Why, the next thing that is to be heard is, thou'rt a cuckold.

Pinch. Insupportable name! [*Aside.*

Horn. But I did not expect marriage from such a whoremaster as you; one that knew the town so much, and women so well.

Pinch. Why, I have married no London wife.

Horn. Pshaw! that's all one. That grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful pampered Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Pinch. [*aside*]. A pox on him and his simile!—[*Aloud.*] At least we are a little surer of the breed there, know what her keeping has been, whether foiled or unsound.

Horn. Come, come, I have known a clap gotten in Wales; and there are cuzens, justices' clerks, and chaplains in the country, I won't say coachmen. But she's handsome and young?

Pinch. [*aside*]. I'll answer as I should do. —[*Aloud.*] No, no; she has no beauty but her youth, no attraction but her modesty: wholesome, homely, and huswifely; that's all.

Dor. He talks as like a grazier as he looks.

Pinch. She's too awkward, ill-favored, and silly to bring to town.

Har. Then methinks you should bring her to be taught breeding.

Pinch. To be taught! no, sir, I thank you. Good wives and private soldiers should be ignorant—I'll keep her from your instructions, I warrant you.

Har. The rogue is as jealous as if his wife were not ignorant. [*Aside.*

Horn. Why, if she be ill-favored, there will be less danger here for you than by leaving her in the country. We have such variety of dainties that we are seldom hungry.

Dor. But they have always coarse, constant, swingeing stomachs in the country.

Har. Foul feeders indeed!

Dor. And your hospitality is great there.

Har. Open house; every man's welcome.

Pinch. So, so, gentlemen.

Horn. But prithee, why wouldst thou marry her? If she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly, she must be rich then.

Pinch. As rich as if she brought me twenty thousand pound out of this town; for she'll be as sure not to spend her moderate portion, as a London baggage would be to spend hers, let it be what it would: so 'tis all one. Then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference betwixt a man of one-and-twenty and one of forty.

Horn. Nine—to my knowledge. But if she be silly, she'll expect as much from a man of forty-nine, as from him of one-and-twenty. But methinks wit is more necessary than beauty; and I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Pinch. 'Tis my maxim, he's a fool that marries; but he's a greater that does not marry a fool. What is wit in a wife good for, but to make a man a cuckold?

Horn. Yes, to keep it from his knowledge.

Pinch. A fool cannot contrive to make her husband a cuckold.

Horn. No; but she'll club with a man that can: and what is worse, if she cannot make her husband a cuckold, she'll make him jealous, and pass for one: and then 'tis all one.

Pinch. Well, well, I'll take care for one. My wife shall make me no cuckold, though she had your help, Mr. Horner. I understand the town, sir.

Dor. His help! [*Aside.*

Har. He's come newly to town, it seems, and has not heard how things are with him. [*Aside.*

Horn. But tell me, has marriage cured thee of whoring, which it seldom does?

Har. 'Tis more than age can do.

Horn. No, the word is, I'll marry and live honest: but a marriage vow is like a penitent gamester's oath, and entering into bonds and penalties to stint himself to such a particular small sum at play for the future, which makes him but the more eager; and not being able to hold out, loses his money again, and his forfeit to boot.

Dor. Ay, ay, a gamester will be a gamester whilst his money lasts, and a whoremaster whilst his vigor.

Har. Nay, I have known 'em, when they are broke, and can lose no more, keep a fumbling with the box in their hands to fool with only, and hinder other gamesters.

Dor. That had wherewithal to make lusty stakes.

Pinch. Well, gentlemen, you may laugh at me; but you shall never lie with my wife: I know the town.

Horn. But prithee, was not the way you were in better? is not keeping better than marriage?

Pinch. A pox on't! the jades would jilt me, I could never keep a whore to myself.

Horn. So, then you only married to keep a whore to yourself. Well, but let me tell you, women, as you say, are like soldiers, made constant and loyal by good pay, rather than by oaths and covenants. Therefore I'd advise my friends to keep rather than marry,

since too I find, by your example, it does not serve one's turn; for I saw you yesterday in the eighteen penny place with a pretty country-wench.

Pinch. How the devil! did he see my wife then? I sat there that she might not be seen. But she shall never go to a play again. [*Aside.*

Horn. What! dost thou blush at nine-and-forty for having been seen with a wench?

Dor. No, faith, I warrant 'twas his wife, which he seated there out of sight; for he's a cunning rogue, and understands the town.

Har. He blushes. Then 'twas his wife; for men are now more ashamed to be seen with them in public than with a wench.

Pinch. Hell and damnation! I'm undone, since Horner has seen her, and they know 'twas she. [*Aside.*

Horn. But prithee, was it thy wife? She was exceeding pretty: I was in love with her at that distance.

Pinch. You are like never to be nearer to her. Your servant, gentlemen. [*Offers to go.*

Horn. Nay, prithee stay.

Pinch. I cannot; I will not.

Horn. Come, you shall dine with us.

Pinch. I have dined already.

Horn. Come, I know thou hast not: I'll treat thee, dear rogue; thou sha't spend none of thy Hampshire money to-day.

Pinch. Treat me! So, he uses me already like his cuckold. [*Aside.*

Horn. Nay, you shall not go.

Pinch. I must; I have business at home. [*Exit.*

Har. To beat his wife. He's as jealous of her as a Cheapside husband of a Covent Garden wife.

Horn. Why, 'tis as hard to find an old whoremaster without jealousy and the gout, as a young one without fear or the pox:—

As gout in age from pox in youth proceeds,
So wenching past, then jealousy succeeds;
The worst disease that love and wenching breeds.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

A Room in Pinchwife's *House.*

Mrs. Margery Pinchwife *and* Alithea. Pinchwife *peeping behind at the door.*

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in, in London?

Alith. A pretty question! Why, sister, Mulberry Garden and St. James's Park; and, for close walks, the New Exchange.

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, sister, tell me why my husband looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and will not let me go a-walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday.

Alith. O, he's jealous, sister.

Mrs. Pinch. Jealous! what's that?

Alith. He's afraid you should love another man.

Mrs. Pinch. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Alith. Did he not carry you yesterday to a play?

Mrs. Pinch. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people. He would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there, whom they toused and moused. But I would have ventured, for all that.

Alith. But how did you like the play?

Mrs. Pinch. Indeed I was weary of the play, but I liked hugeously the actors. They are the goodliest, properest men, sister!

Alith. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, how should I help it, sister? Pray, sister, when my husband comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a-walking?

Alith. A-walking! ha! ha! Lord, a country-gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a footpost; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses.—[*Aside.*] But here comes your husband: I'll ask, though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Mrs. Pinch. He says he won't let me go abroad for fear of catching the pox.

Alith. Fy! the small-pox you should say.

Enter Pinchwife *to them.*

Mrs. Pinch. O my dear, dear but, welcome home! Why dost thou look so fropish? who has nangered thee?

Pinch. You're a fool.

[Mrs. Pinchwife *goes aside, and cries.*

Alith. Faith, so she is, for crying for no fault, poor tender creature!

Pinch. What, you would have her as impudent as yourself, as errant a jillflirt, a gadder, a magpie; and to say all, a mere notorious town-woman?

Alith. Brother, you are my only censurer; and the honor of your family will sooner suffer in your wife there than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town.

Pinch. Hark you, mistress, do not talk so before my wife.—The innocent liberty of the town!

Alith. Why, pray, who boasts of any intrigue with me? what lampoon has made my name notorious? what ill women frequent my lodgings? I keep no company with any women of scandalous reputations.

Pinch. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputations company.

Alith. Where? would you not have me civil? answer 'em in a box at the plays, in the drawing-room at Whitehall, in St. James's Park, Mulberry Garden, or——

Pinch. Hold, hold! Do not teach my wife where the men are to be found: I believe she's the worse for your town-documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance, as I do.

Mrs. Pinch. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud, she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Pinch. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find?

Mrs. Pinch. Not I indeed, dear; I hate London. Our place-house in the country is worth a thousand of't: would I were there again!

Pinch. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in?—[*To* Alithea.] You are her encourager in such discourses.

Mrs. Pinch. No, indeed, dear; she chid me just now for liking the playermen.

Pinch. [*aside*]. Nay, if she be so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there is no hurt in't.—[*Aloud.*] Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, indeed, but I do. The playermen are finer folks.

Pinch. But you love none better than me?

Mrs. Pinch. You are my own dear bud, and I know you. I hate a stranger.

Pinch. Ay, my dear, you must love me only, and not be like the naughty town-women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town-life.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town-life, London is not so bad a place, dear.

Pinch. How! if you love me, you must hate London.

Alith. The fool has forbid me discovering to her the pleasures of the town, and he is now setting her agog upon them himself. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. But, husband, do the town-women love the playermen too?

Pinch. Yes, I warrant you.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, I warrant you.

Pinch. Why, you do not, I hope?

Mrs. Pinch. No, no, bud. But why have we no playermen in the country?

Pinch. Ha!—Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going: but when you forbid me, you make me, as 'twere, desire it.

Alith. So 'twill be in other things, I warrant. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Pray let me go to a play, dear.

Pinch. Hold your peace, I wo' not.

Mrs. Pinch. Why, love?

Pinch. Why, I'll tell you.

Alith. Nay, if he tell her, she'll give him more cause to forbid her that place. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Pray why, dear?

Pinch. First, you like the actors; and the gallants may like you.

Mrs. Pinch. What, a homely country girl! No, bud, nobody will like me.

Pinch. I tell you yes, they may.

Mrs. Pinch. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you: I will go.

Pinch. I tell you then, that one of the lewdest fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Mrs. Pinch. Indeed! who, who, pray who was't?

Pinch. I've gone too far, and slipped before I was aware; how overjoyed she is! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Was it any Hampshire gallant, any of our neighbors? I promise you, I am beholden to him.

Pinch. I promise you, you lie; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds. He has no other love for women but that; such as he look upon women, like basilisks, but to destroy 'em.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me? answer me to that. Methinks he should not, I would do him no harm.

Alith. Ha! ha! ha!

Pinch. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company; get you in, get you in.

Mrs. Pinch. But, pray, husband, is he a pretty gentleman that loves me?

Pinch. In, baggage, in.

[*Thrusts her in, shuts the door.*

Enter Sparkish *and* Harcourt.

What, all the lewd libertines of the town brought to my lodging by this easy coxcomb! 'sdeath, I'll not suffer it.

Spark. Here, Harcourt, do you approve my choice?—[*To* Alithea.] Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits and——

[Harcourt *salutes her.*

Pinch. Ay, they shall know her, as well as you yourself will, I warrant you.

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow; and him you must bid welcome ever, to what you and I have.

Pinch. Monstrous! [*Aside.*

Spark. Harcourt, how dost thou like her, faith? Nay, dear, do not look down; I should

hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at anything.

Pinch. Wonderful! [*Aside.*

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost thou like her? Thou hast stared upon her enough, to resolve me.

Har. So infinitely well, that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Alith. Sir, Master Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railleurs, and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him. I do assure you, he is the honestest, worthiest, true-hearted gentleman—a man of such perfect honor, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Pinch. Praising another man to his mistress! [*Aside.*

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that——

Spark. Nay, egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see't in your eyes.—He does admire you, madam.—By the world, don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex: and till now I never thought I should have envied you, or any man about to marry, but you have the best excuse for marriage I ever knew.

Alith. Nay, now, sir, I'm satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railleurs, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is but too civil to you; but the surest sign is, since you are an enemy to marriage,—for that I hear you hate as much as business or bad wine.

Har. Truly, madam, I was never an enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Alith. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? because it robs you of your friend here? for you look upon a friend married, as one gone into a monastery, that is, dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis indeed, because you marry him; I see, madam, you can guess my meaning. I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by Heavens I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Alith. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no, 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank! no gad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Pinch. Great kindness to you indeed! Insensible fop, let a man make love to his wife to his face! [*Aside.*

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shalt enjoy me sometimes, dear rogue. By my honor, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest: I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt?—But come, Frank, be not melancholy for me.

Har. No, I assure you, I am not melancholy for you.

Spark. Prithee, Frank, dost think my wife that shall be there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? how?

Har. Because you are a lover, and true lovers are blind, stock blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty: go, go with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; talk to her anything; she's bashful before me.

Har. Indeed if a woman wants wit in a corner, she has it nowhere.

Alith. Sir, you dispose of me a little before your time—— [*Aside to* Sparkish.

Spark. Nay, nay, madam, let me have an earnest of your obedience, or—go, go, madam—— [Harcourt *courts* Alithea *aside.*

Pinch. How, sir! if you are not concerned for the honor of a wife, I am for that of a sister; he shall not debauch her. Be a pander to your own wife! bring men to her! let 'em make love before your face! thrust 'em into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha! ha! ha! a silly wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha! ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee, by the world.

[*Struggles with* Pinchwife *to keep him from* Harcourt *and* Alithea.

Alith. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made; 'tis too late, sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Alith. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Alith. I have no obligation to you.

Har. My love.

Alith. I had his before.

Har. You never had it; he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Alith. Love proceeds from esteem; he cannot distrust my virtue: besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more sign of his love than bribing your woman, that he may marry you, is a sign of his generosity. Marriage is rather a sign of interest than love; and he that marries a fortune covets a mistress, not loves her. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Alith. No, now you have put a scruple in my head; but in short, sir, to end our dis-

pute, I must marry him, my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No; if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation suffers in the world, and you would be thought in necessity for a cloak.

Alith. Nay, now you are rude, sir.—Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome, and very loving.

Har. Hold! hold!— [*Aside to* Alithea.

Pinch. D'ye hear that?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem to be jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Pinch. No, rather be a cuckold, like a credulous cit.

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him.

Alith. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him! no man can do't, he's beneath an injury: a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot, a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that—

Alith. Hold, do not rail at him, for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him: nay, I think I am obliged to tell him you are not his friend.—Master Sparkish, Master Sparkish!

Spark. What, what?—[*To* Harcourt.] Now, dear rogue, has not she wit?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had. [*Speaks surlily.*

Alith. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you?

Har. Madam—

Spark. How! no; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant: what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Alith. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him; besides, he has been making love to me.

Har. True, damned tell-tale woman! [*Aside.*

Spark. Pshaw! to show his parts—we wits rail and make love often, but to show our parts: as we have no affections, so we have no malice, we—

Alith. He said you were a wretch below an injury—

Spark. Pshaw!

Har. Damned, senseless, impudent, virtuous jade! Well, since she won't let me have her, she'll do as good, she'll make me hate her. [*Aside.*

Alith. A common bubble—

Spark. Pshaw!

Alith. A coward—

Spark. Pshaw, pshaw!

Alith. A senseless, drivelling idiot—

Spark. How! did he disparage my parts? Nay, then, my honor's concerned, I can't put up that, sir, by the world—brother, help me to kill him.—[*Aside.*] I may draw now, since we have the odds of him:—'tis a good occasion, too, before my mistress— [*Offers to draw.*

Alith. Hold, hold!

Spark. What, what?

Alith. [*aside*]. I must not let 'em kill the gentleman neither, for his kindness to me: I am so far from hating him, that I wish my gallant had his person and understanding. Nay, if my honor—

Spark. I'll be thy death.

Alith. Hold, hold! Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How! say, I am, I am a fool, that is, no wit, out of friendship to me?

Alith. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue, for your sake.

Har. Kind, however. [*Aside.*

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon; but why would not you tell me so, faith?

Har. Because I did not think on't, faith.

Spark. Come, Horner does not come; Harcourt, let's be gone to the new play.—Come, madam.

Alith. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run into the pit, as you use to do.

Spark. Pshaw! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box to entertain you, and that's as good; if I sat in the box, I should be thought no judge but of trimmings.—Come away, Harcourt, lead her down.

[*Exeunt* Sparkish, Harcourt, *and* Alithea.

Pinch. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops, such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my own freehold.—How!

Enter My Lady Fidget, Mrs. Dainty Fidget, *and* Mrs. Squeamish.

Lady Fid. Your servant, sir: where is your lady? We are come to wait upon her to the new play.

Pinch. New play!

Lady Fid. And my husband will wait upon you presently.

Pinch. [*aside*]. Damn your civility.—[*Aloud.*] Madam, by no means; I will not see Sir Jasper here, till I have waited upon him at home; nor shall my wife see you till she has waited upon your ladyship at your lodgings.

Lady Fid. Now we are here, sir?

Pinch. No, Madam.

Mrs. Dain. Pray, let us see her.

Mrs. Squeam. We will not stir till we see her.

Pinch. [*aside*]. A pox on you all!—[*Goes*

to the door, and returns.] She has locked the door, and is gone abroad.

Lady Fid. No, you have locked the door, and she's within.

Mrs. Dain. They told us below she was here.

Pinch. [*aside*]. Will nothing do?—[*Aloud.*] Well, it must out then. To tell you the truth, ladies, which I was afraid to let you know before, lest it might endanger your lives, my wife has just now the small-pox come out upon her; do not be frightened; but pray be gone, ladies; you shall not stay here in danger of your lives; pray get you gone, ladies.

Lady Fid. No, no, we have all had 'em.

Mrs. Squeam. Alack, alack!

Mrs. Dain. Come, come, we must see how it goes with her; I understand the disease.

Lady Fid. Come!

Pinch. [*aside*]. Well, there is no being too hard for women at their own weapon, lying, therefore I'll quit the field. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Squeam. Here's an example of jealousy!

Lady Fid. Indeed, as the world goes, I wonder there are no more jealous, since wives are so neglected.

Mrs. Dain. Pshaw! as the world goes, to what end should they be jealous?

Lady Fid. Foh! 'tis a nasty world.

Mrs. Squeam. That men of parts, great acquaintance, and quality, should take up with and spend themselves and fortunes in keeping little playhouse creatures, foh!

Lady Fid. Nay, that women of understanding, great acquaintance, and good quality, should fall a-keeping too of little creatures, foh!

Mrs. Squeam. Why, 'tis the men of quality's fault; they never visit women of honor and reputation as they used to do; and have not so much as common civility for ladies of our rank, but use us with the same indifferency and ill-breeding as if we were al' married to 'em.

Lady Fid. She says true; 'tis an errant shame women of quality should be so slighted; methinks birth—birth should go for something; I have known men admired, courted, and followed for their titles only.

Mrs. Squeam. Ay, one would think men of honor should not love, no more than marry, out of their own rank.

Mrs. Dain. Fy, fy, upon 'em! they are come to think cross breeding for themselves best, as well as for their dogs and horses.

Lady Fid. They are dogs and horses for't.

Mrs. Squeam. One would think, if not for love, for vanity a little.

Mrs. Dain. Nay, they do satisfy their vanity upon us sometimes; and are kind to us in their report, tell all the world they lie with us.

Lady Fid. Damned rascals, that we should be only wronged by 'em! To report a man has had a person, when he has not had a person, is the greatest wrong in the whole world that can be done to a person.

Mrs. Squeam. Well, 'tis an errant shame noble persons should be so wronged and neglected.

Lady Fid. But still 'tis an erranter shame for a noble person to neglect her own honor, and defame her own noble person with little inconsiderable fellows, foh!

Mrs. Dain. I suppose the crime against our honor is the same with a man of quality as with another.

Lady Fid. How! no, sure, the man of quality is likest one's husband, and therefore the fault should be the less.

Mrs. Dain. But then the pleasure should be the less.

Lady Fid. Fy, fy, fy, for shame, sister! whither shall we ramble? Be continent in your discourse, or I shall hate you.

Mrs. Dain. Besides, an intrigue is so much the more notorious for the man's quality.

Mrs. Squeam. 'Tis true, nobody takes notice of a private man, and therefore with him 'tis more secret; and the crime's the less when 'tis not known.

Lady Fid. You say true; i'faith, I think you are in the right on't: 'tis not an injury to a husband, till it be an injury to our honors; so that a woman of honor loses no honor with a private person; and to say truth——

Mrs. Dain. So, the little fellow is grown a private person—with her——

[*Apart to* Mrs. Squeamish.

Lady Fid. But still my dear, dear honor——

Enter Sir Jasper, Horner, *and* Dorilant.

Sir Jasp. Ay, my dear, dear of honor, thou hast still so much honor in thy mouth——

Horn. That she has none elsewhere.

[*Aside.*

Lady Fid. Oh, what d'ye mean to bring in these upon us?

Mrs. Dain. Foh! these are as bad as wits.

Mrs. Squeam. Foh!

Lady Fid. Let us leave the room.

Sir Jasp. Stay, stay; faith, to tell you the naked truth——

Lady Fid. Fy, Sir Jasper! do not use that word naked.

Sir Jasp. Well, well, in short I have business at Whitehall, and cannot go to the play with you, therefore would have you go——

Lady Fid. With those two to a play?

Sir. Jasp. No, not with t'other, but with Mr. Horner; there can be no more scandal to go with him than with Mr. Tattle, or Master Limberham.

Lady Fid. With that nasty fellow! no—no.

Sir Jasp. Nay, prithee, dear, hear me. [*Whispers to* Lady Fidget.

Horn. Ladies——

[Horner, Dorilant *drawing near* Mrs. Squeamish *and* Mrs. Dainty Fidget.

Mrs. Dain. Stand off.

Mrs. Squeam. Do not approach us.

Mrs. Dain. You herd with the wits, you are obscenity all over.

Mrs. Squeam. And I would as soon look upon a picture of Adam and Eve, without fig-leaves, as any of you, if I could help it; therefore keep off, and do not make us sick.

Dor. What a devil are these?

Horn. Why, these are pretenders to honor, as critics to wit, only by censuring others; and as every raw, peevish, out-of-humored, affected, dull, tea-drinking, arithmetical fop, sets up for a wit by railing at men of sense, so these for honor, by railing at the court, and ladies of as great honor as quality.

Sir Jasp. Come, Mr. Horner, I must desire you to go with these ladies to the play, sir.

Horn. I, sir?

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, come, sir.

Horn. I must beg your pardon, sir, and theirs; I will not be seen in women's company in public again for the world.

Sir Jasp. Ha, ha, strange aversion!

Mrs. Squeam. No, he's for women's company in private.

Sir Jasp. He—poor man—he—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Dain. 'Tis a greater shame amongst lewd fellows to be seen in virtuous women's company, than for the women to be seen with them.

Horn. Indeed, madam, the time was I only hated virtuous women, but now I hate the other too; I beg your pardon, ladies.

Lady Fid. You are very obliging, sir, because we would not be troubled with you.

Sir Jasp. In sober sadness, he shall go.

Dor. Nay, if he wo' not, I am ready to wait upon the ladies, and I think I am the fitter man.

Sir Jasp. You, sir! no, I thank you for that. Master Horner is a privileged man amongst the virtuous ladies, 'twill be a great while before you are so; he! he! he! he's my wife's gallant; he! he! he! No, pray withdraw, sir, for as I take it, the virtuous ladies have no business with you.

Dor. And I am sure he can have none with them. 'Tis strange a man can't come amongst virtuous women now, but upon the same terms as men are admitted into the Great Turk's seraglio. But heavens keep me from being an ombre player with 'em!—But where is Pinchwife? [*Exit.*

Sir Jasp. Come, come, man; what, avoid the sweet society of womankind? that sweet, soft, gentle, tame, noble creature, woman, made for man's companion——

Horn. So is that soft, gentle, tame, and more noble creature a spaniel, and has all their tricks; can fawn, lie down, suffer beating, and fawn the more; barks at your friends when they come to see you, makes your bed hard, gives you fleas, and the mange sometimes. And all the difference is, the spaniel's the more faithful animal, and fawns but upon one master.

Sir Jasp. He! he! he!

Mrs. Squeam. O the rude beast!

Mrs. Dain. Insolent brute!

Lady Fid. Brute! stinking, mortified, rotten French wether, to dare——

Sir Jasp. Hold, an't please your ladyship.—For shame, Master Horner! your mother was a woman—[*Aside*]. Now shall I never reconcile 'em.—[*Aside to* Lady Fidget.] Hark you, madam, take my advice in your anger. You know you often want one to make up your drolling pack of ombre players, and you may cheat him easily; for he's an ill gamester, and consequently loves play. Besides, you know you have but two old civil gentlemen (with stinking breaths too) to wait upon you abroad; take in the third into your service. The others are but crazy; and a lady should have a supernumerary gentleman-usher as a supernumerary coach-horse, lest sometimes you should be forced to stay at home.

Lady Fid. But are you sure he loves play, and has money?

Sir Jasp. He loves play as much as you, and has money as much as I.

Lady Fid. Then I am contented to make him pay for his scurrility. Money makes up in a measure all other wants in men.—Those whom we cannot make hold for gallants, we make fine. [*Aside.*

Sir Jasp. [*aside*]. So, so; now to mollify, to wheedle him.—[*Aside to* Horner.] Master Horner, will you never keep civil company? methinks 'tis time now, since you are only fit for them. Come, come, man, you must e'en fall to visiting our wives, eating at our tables, drinking tea with our virtuous relations after dinner, dealing cards to 'em, reading plays and gazettes to 'em, picking fleas out of their shocks for 'em, collecting receipts, new songs, women, pages, and footmen for 'em.

Horn. I hope they'll afford me better employment, sir.

Sir Jasp. He! he! he! 'tis fit you know your work before you come into your place. And since you are unprovided of a lady to flatter, and a good house to eat at, pray frequent mine, and call my wife mistress, and she shall call you gallant, according to the custom.

Horn. Who, I?

Sir Jasp. Faith, thou sha't for my sake; come, for my sake only.

Horn. For your sake——

Sir Jasp. Come, come, here's a gamester for you; let him be a little familiar sometimes; nay, what if a little rude? Gamesters may be rude with ladies, you know.

Lady Fid. Yes; losing gamesters have a privilege with women.

Horn. I always thought the contrary, that the winning gamester had most privilege with women; for when you have lost your money to a man, you'll lose anything you have, all you have, they say, and he may use you as he pleases.

Sir Jasp. He! he! he! well, win or lose, you shall have your liberty with her.

Lady Fid. As he behaves himself; and for your sake I'll give him admittance and freedom.

Horn. All sorts of freedom, madam?

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, ay, all sorts of freedom thou canst take. And so go to her, begin thy new employment; wheedle her, jest with her, and be better acquainted one with another.

Horn. [*aside*]. I think I know her already; therefore may venture with her my secret for hers. [Horner *and* Lady Fidget *whisper.*

Sir Jasp. Sister cuz, I have provided an innocent playfellow for you there.

Mrs. Dain. Who, he?

Mrs. Squeam. There's a playfellow, indeed!

Sir Jasp. Yes, sure.—What, he is good enough to play at cards, blindman's-buff, or the fool with, sometimes!

Mrs. Squeam. Foh! we'll have no such playfellows.

Mrs. Dain. No, sir; you shan't choose playfellows for us, we thank you.

Sir Jasp. Nay, pray hear me.

[*Whispering to them.*

Lady Fid. But, poor gentleman, could you be so generous, so truly a man of honor, as for the sakes of us women of honor, to cause yourself to be reported no man? No man! and to suffer yourself the greatest shame that could fall upon a man, that none might fall upon us women by your conversation? but, indeed, sir, as perfectly, perfectly the same man as before your going into France, sir? as perfectly, perfectly, sir?

Horn. As perfectly, perfectly, madam. Nay, I scorn you should take my word; I desire to be tried only, madam.

Lady Fid. Well, that's spoken again like a man of honor: all men of honor desire to come to the test. But, indeed, generally you men report such things of yourselves, one does not know how or whom to believe; and it is come to that pass, we dare not take your words no more than your tailor's, without some staid servant of yours be bound with you. But I have so strong a faith in your honor, dear, dear, noble sir, that I'd forfeit mine for yours, at any time, dear sir.

Horn. No, madam, you should not need to forfeit it for me; I have given you security already to save you harmless, my late reputation being so well known in the world, madam.

Lady Fid. But if upon any future falling-out, or upon a suspicion of my taking the trust out of your hands, to employ some other, you yourself should betray your trust, dear sir? I mean, if you'll give me leave to speak obscenely, you might tell, dear sir.

Horn. If I did, nobody would believe me. The reputation of impotency is as hardly recovered again in the world as that of cowardice, dear madam.

Lady Fid. Nay, then, as one may say, you may do your worst, dear, dear sir.

Sir Jasp. Come, is your ladyship reconciled to him yet? have you agreed on matters? for I must be gone to Whitehall.

Lady Fid. Why, indeed, Sir Jasper, Master Horner is a thousand, thousand times a better man than I thought him. Cousin Squeamish, sister Dainty, I can name him now. Truly, not long ago, you know, I thought his very name obscenity; and I would as soon have lain with him as have named him.

Sir Jasp. Very likely, poor madam.

Mrs. Dain. I believe it.

Mrs. Squeam. No doubt on't.

Sir Jasp. Well, well—that your ladyship is as virtuous as any she, I know, and him all the town knows—he! he! he! therefore now you like him, get you gone to your business together, go, go to your business, I say, pleasure, whilst I go to my pleasure, business.

Lady Fid. Come, then, dear gallant.

Horn. Come away, my dearest mistress.

Sir Jasp. So, so; why, 'tis as I'd have it.

[*Exit.*

Horn. And as I'd have it.

Lady Fid.

Who for his business from his wife will run,
Takes the best care to have her business done.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

Scene I

A Room in Pinchwife's *House.*

Alithea *and* Mrs. Pinchwife.

Alith. Sister, what ails you? you are grown melancholy.

Mrs. Pinch. Would it not make any one melancholy to see you go every day flattering about abroad, whilst I must stay at home like a poor lonely sullen bird in a cage?

Alith. Ay, sister, but you came young, and just from the nest to your cage: so that I thought you liked it, and could be as cheerful in't as others that took their flight themselves early, and are hopping abroad in the open air.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough till my husband told me what pure lives the London ladies live abroad, with their dancing, meetings, and junketings, and dressed every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you, play at nine-pins every day of the week, so they do.

Enter PINCHWIFE.

Pinch. Come, what's here to do? you are putting the town-pleasures in her head, and setting her a-longing.

Alith. Yes, after nine-pins. You suffer none to give her those longings you mean but yourself.

Pinch. I tell her of the vanities of the town like a confessor.

Alith. A confessor! just such a confessor as he that, by forbidding a silly ostler to grease the horse's teeth, taught him to do't.

Pinch. Come, Mistress Flippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty you take abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humor at home. Poor wretch! she desired not to come to London; I would bring her.

Alith. Very well.

Pinch. She has been this week in town, and never desired till this afternoon to go abroad.

Alith. Was she not at a play yesterday?

Pinch. Yes, but she ne'er asked me; I was myself the cause of her going.

Alith. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my example.

Pinch. Well, to-morrow night I shall be rid of you; and the next day, before 'tis light, she and I'll be rid of the town, and my dreadful apprehensions.—Come, be not melancholy; for thou sha't go into the country after to-morrow, dearest.

Alith. Great comfort!

Mrs. Pinch. Pish! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Pinch. How's this! what, pish at the country?

Mrs. Pinch. Let me alone; I am not well.

Pinch. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest?

Mrs. Pinch. Truly, I don't know: but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Pinch. Ha!——

Alith. That's by my example too!

Pinch. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concerned, because a lewd fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Mrs. Pinch. Of what sickness?

Pinch. O, of that which is worse than the plague, jealousy.

Mrs. Pinch. Pish, you jeer! I'm sure there's no such disease in our receipt-book at home.

Pinch. No, thou never met'st with it, poor innocent.—Well, if thou cuckold me, 'twill be my own fault—for cuckolds and bastards are generally makers of their own fortune.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Pinch. 'Tis just done, she comes from it. But why are you so eager to see a play?

Mrs. Pinch. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the player-men, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me: that's all, dear bud.

Pinch. Is that all, dear bud?

Alith. This proceeds from my example!

Mrs. Pinch. But if the play be done, let's go abroad, however, dear bud.

Pinch. Come, have a little patience and thou shalt go into the country on Friday.

Mrs. Pinch. Therefore I would see first some sights to tell my neighbors of. Nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Alith. I'm the cause of this desire too!

Pinch. But now I think on't, who, who was the cause of Horner's coming to my lodgings to-day? That was you.

Alith. No, you, because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodging.

Mrs. Pinch. Why, O Lord! did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Pinch. No, no.—You are not the cause of that damned question too, Mistress Alithea? —[*Aside.*] Well, she's in the right of it. He is in love with my wife—and comes after her—'tis so—but I'll nip his love in the bud; lest he should follow us into the country, and break his chariot-wheel near our house, on purpose for an excuse to come to't. But I think I know the town.

Mrs. Pinch. Come, pray, bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late; for I will go, that's flat and plain.

Pinch. [*aside*]. So! the obstinacy already of the town-wife; and I must, whilst she's here, humor her like one.—[*Aloud.*] Sister, how shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Alith. Let her put on her mask.

Pinch. Pshaw! a mask makes people but the more inquisitive, and is as ridiculous a disguise as a stage-beard: her shape, stature, habit will be known. And if we should meet with Horner, he would be sure to take acquaintance with us, must wish her joy, kiss her, talk to her, leer upon her, and the devil and all. No, I'll not use her to a mask, 'tis

dangerous; for masks have made more cuckolds than the best faces that ever were known.

Alith. How will you do then?

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, shall we go? The Exchange will be shut, and I have a mind to see that.

Pinch. So—I have it—I'll dress her up in the suit we are to carry down to her brother, little Sir James; nay, I understand the town-tricks. Come, let's go dress her. A mask! no—a woman masked, like a covered dish, gives a man curiosity and appetite; when, it may be, uncovered, 'twould turn his stomach: no, no.

Alith. Indeed your comparison is something a greasy one: but I had a gentle gallant used to say, A beauty masked, like the sun in eclipse, gathers together more gazers than if it shined out. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

The Scene Changes to the New Exchange.

Enter HORNER, HARCOURT, *and* DORILANT.

Dor. Engaged to women, and not sup with us!

Horn. Ay, a pox on 'em all!

Har. You were much a more reasonable man in the morning, and had as noble resolutions against 'em as a widower of a week's liberty.

Dor. Did I ever think to see you keep company with women in vain?

Horn. In vain: no—'tis since I can't love 'em, to be revenged on 'em.

Har. Now your sting is gone, you looked in the box amongst all those women like a drone in the hive; all upon you, shoved and ill-used by 'em all, and thrust from one side to t'other.

Dor. Yet he must be buzzing amongst 'em still, like other beetle-headed liquorish drones. Avoid 'em, and hate 'em, as they hate you.

Horn. Because I do hate 'em, and would hate 'em yet more, I'll frequent 'em. You may see by marriage, nothing makes a man hate a woman more than her constant conversation. In short, I converse with 'em, as you do with rich fools, to laugh at 'em and use 'em ill.

Dor. But I would no more sup with women, unless I could lie with 'em, than sup with a rich coxcomb, unless I could cheat him.

Horn. Yes, I have known thee sup with a fool for his drinking; if he could set out your hand that way only, you were satisfied, and if he were a wine-swallowing mouth, 'twas enough.

Har. Yes, a man drinks often with a fool, as he tosses with a marker, only to keep his hand in ure. But do the ladies drink?

Horn. Yes, sir; and I shall have the pleasure at least of laying 'em flat with a bottle, and bring as much scandal that way upon 'em as formerly t'other.

Har. Perhaps you may prove as weak a brother amongst 'em that way as t'other.

Dor. Foh! drinking with women is as unnatural as scolding with 'em. But 'tis a pleasure of decayed fornicators, and the basest way of quenching love.

Har. Nay, 'tis drowning love, instead of quenching it. But leave us for civil women too!

Dor. Ay, when he can't be the better for 'em. We hardly pardon a man that leaves his friend for a wench, and that's a pretty lawful call.

Horn. Faith, I would not leave you for 'em, if they would not drink.

Dor. Who would disappoint his company at Lewis's for a gossiping?

Har. Foh! Wine and women, good apart, together as nauseous as sack and sugar. But hark you, sir, before you go, a little of your advice; an old maimed general, when unfit for action, is fittest for counsel. I have other designs upon women than eating and drinking with them; I am in love with Sparkish's mistress, whom he is to marry to-morrow: now how shall I get her?

Enter SPARKISH, *looking about.*

Horn. Why, here comes one will help you to her.

Har. He! he, I tell you, is my rival, and will hinder my love.

Horn. No; a foolish rival and a jealous husband assist their rival's designs; for they are sure to make their women hate them, which is the first step to their love for another man.

Har. But I cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Horn. Still the better for you; for fools are most easily cheated when they themselves are accessories: and he is to be bubbled of his mistress as of his money, the common mistress, by keeping him company.

Spark. Who is that that is to be bubbled? Faith, let me snack; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles are like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. A pox! he did not hear all, I hope.

[*Apart to* HORNER.

Spark. Come, you bubbling rogues you, where do we sup?—Oh, Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have been making fierce love to her all the play long: ha! ha!—But I——

Har. I make love to her!

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, for I think I

know thee, and I know her; but I am sure I know myself.

Har. Did she tell you so? I see all women are like these of the Exchange; who, to enhance the prize of their commodities, report to their fond customers offers which were never made 'em.

Horn. Ay, women are apt to tell before the intrigue, as men after it, and so show themselves the vainer sex. But hast thou a mistress, Sparkish? 'Tis as hard for me to believe it, as that thou ever hadst a bubble, as you bragged just now.

Spark. O, your servant, sir: are you at your raillery, sir? But we are some of us beforehand with you to-day at the play. The wits were something bold with you, sir; did you not hear us laugh?

Horn. Yes; but I thought you had gone to plays, to laugh at the poet's wit, not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir: no, I thank you. 'Gad, I go to a play as to a country treat; I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either. And the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we think we speak more wit, and so become the poet's rivals in his audience: for to tell you the truth, we hate the silly rogues; nay, so much, that we find fault even with their bawdy upon the stage, whilst we talk nothing else in the pit as loud.

Horn. But why shouldst thou hate the silly poets? Thou hast too much wit to be one; and they, like whores, are only hated by each other: and thou dost scorn writing, I'm sure.

Spark. Yes; I'd have you to know I scorn writing: but women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Everybody does it. 'Tis even as common with lovers, as playing with fans; and you can no more help rhyming to your Phyllis, than drinking to your Phyllis.

Har. Nay, poetry in love is no more to be avoided than jealousy.

Dor. But the poets damned your songs, did they?

Spark. Damn the poets! they have turned 'em into burlesque, as they call it. That burlesque is a hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of *Hictius doctius, topsy turvy,* they make a wise and witty man in the world, a fool upon the stage you know not how: and 'tis therefore I hate 'em too, for I know not but it may be my own case; for they'll put a man into a play for looking asquint. Their predecessors were contented to make serving-men only their stage-fools: but these rogues must have gentlemen, with a pox to 'em, nay, knights; and, indeed, you shall hardly see a fool upon the stage but he's a knight. And to tell you the truth, they have kept me these six years from being a knight in earnest, for fear of being knighted in a play, and dubbed a fool.

Dor. Blame 'em not, they must follow their copy, the age.

Har. But why shouldst thou be afraid of being in a play, who expose yourself every day in the play-houses, and at public places?

Horn. 'Tis but being on the stage, instead of standing on a bench in the pit.

Dor. Don't you give money to painters to draw you like? and are you afraid of your pictures at length in a playhouse, where all your mistresses may see you?

Spark. A pox! painters don't draw the small-pox or pimples in one's face. Come, damn all your silly authors whatever, all books and booksellers, by the world, and all readers, courteous or uncourteous!

Har. But who comes here, Sparkish?

Enter Mr. Pinchwife *and his Wife in man's clothes,* Alithea, Lucy *her maid.*

Spark. Oh, hide me! There's my mistress too.

[Sparkish *hides himself behind* Harcourt.

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her. 'Tis time to go to Whitehall, and I must not fail the drawing-room.

Har. Pray, first carry me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time. Faith, the king will have supped.

Har. Not with the worse stomach for thy absence. Thou art one of those fools that think their attendance at the king's meals as necessary as his physicians, when you are more troublesome to him than his doctors or his dogs.

Spark. Pshaw! I know my interest, sir. Prithee hide me.

Horn. Your servant, Pinchwife.—What, he knows us not!

Pinch. Come along. [*To his Wife aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, have you any ballads? give me sixpenny worth.

Clasp. We have no ballads.

Mrs. Pinch. Then give me "Covent Garden Drollery," and a play or two—Oh, here's "Tarugo's Wiles," and "The Slighted Maiden"; I'll have them.

Pinch. No; plays are not for your reading. Come along; will you discover yourself? [*Apart to her.*

Horn. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. I believe his wife's brother, because he's something like her: but I never saw her but once.

Horn. Extremely handsome; I have seen a face like it too. Let us follow 'em.

[*Exeunt* Pinchwife, Mrs. Pinchwife,

Alithea, Lucy; Horner, Dorilant *following them.*

Har. Come, Sparkish, your mistress saw you, and will be angry you go not to her. Besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend. I would not go near her now for hers or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you indeed, dear friend. I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends. I would be contented she should enjoy you a-nights, but I would have you to myself a-days as I have had, dear friend.

Spark. And thou shalt enjoy me a-days, dear, dear friend, never stir: and I'll be divorced from her, sooner than from thee. Come along.

Har. [*aside*]. So, we are hard put to't, when we make our rival our procurer; but neither she nor her brother would let me come near her now. When all's done, a rival is the best cloak to steal to a mistress under, without suspicion; and when we have once got to her as we desire, we throw him off like other cloaks.

[*Exit* Sparkish, *and* Harcourt *following him.*

Re-enter Pinchwife, Mrs. Pinchwife *in man's clothes.*

Pinch. [*to* Alithea]. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you.—[*Aside.*] The fool her gallant and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place, and they will leave their dear sempstresses to follow us. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here!—Come, let's be gone, Mistress Margery.

Mrs. Pinch. Don't you believe that; I han't half my bellyfull of sights yet.

Pinch. Then walk this way.

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, what a power of brave signs are here! stay—the Bull's-Head, the Ram's-Head, and the Stag's-Head, dear——

Pinch. Nay, if every husband's proper sign here were visible, they would be all alike.

Mrs. Pinch. What d'ye mean by that, bud?

Pinch. 'Tis no matter—no matter, bud.

Mrs. Pinch. Pray tell me: nay, I will know.

Pinch. They would be all Bulls', Stags', and Rams'-heads.

[*Exeunt* Mr. Pinchwife *and* Mrs. Pinchwife.

Re-enter Sparkish, Harcourt, Alithea, Lucy, *at t'other door.*

Spark. Come, dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Alith. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay indeed, madam, too, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Alith. I hate him because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one! I hate a man for loving you! If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you. I hate a man for being of my opinion! I'll n'er do't, by the world.

Alith. Is it for your honor, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?

Spark. Is it for your honor, or mine, to have me jealous? That he makes love to you, is a sign you are handsome; and that I am not jealous, is a sign you are virtuous. That I think is for your honor.

Alith. But 'tis your honor too I am concerned for.

Har. But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honor than he is himself? Let his honor alone, for my sake and his. He! he has no honor——

Spark. How's that?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself.

Spark. O ho—that's right again.

Har. Your care of his honor argues his neglect of it, which is no honor to my dear friend here. Therefore once more, let his honor go which way it will, dear madam.

Spark. Ay, ay; were it for my honor to marry a woman whose virtue I suspected, and could not trust her in a friend's hands?

Alith. Are you not afraid to lose me?

Har. He afraid to lose you, madam! No, no—you may see how the most estimable and most glorious creature in the world is valued by him. Will you not see it?

Spark. Right, honest Frank, I have that noble value for her that I cannot be jealous of her.

Alith. You mistake him. He means, you care not for me, nor who has me.

Spark. Lord, madam, I see you are jealous! Will you wrest a poor man's meaning from his words?

Alith. You astonish me, sir, with your want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honor. 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Alith. Monstrous!

Lucy. Well, to see what easy husbands these women of quality can meet with! a poor chambermaid can never have such ladylike luck. Besides, he's thrown away upon her. She'll make no use of her fortune, her blessing, none to a gentleman, for a pure cuckold; for it requires good breeding to be a cuckold. [*Aside.*

Alith. I tell you then plainly, he pursues me to marry me.

Spark. Pshaw!

Har. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me. My dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favor, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: would you would do so! Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there. Hear him, hear him, and do not walk away so.

[Alithea *walks carelessly to and fro.*

Har. I love you, madam, so——

Spark. How's that? Nay, now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much, I confess, I say, I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here.

[*Clapping his hand on his breast, points at* Sparkish.

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not: now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me, nor her.

Har. No, no, Heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low, as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind—my friend here—I injure him! [*Embracing* Sparkish.

Alith. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it.—Madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me, in giving himself such names.

Alith. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Yes: how modestly he speaks of himself, poor fellow!

Alith. Methinks he speaks impudently of yourself, since—before yourself too; insomuch that I can no longer suffer his scurrilous abusiveness to you, no more than his love to me. [*Offers to go.*

Spark. Nay, nay, madam, pray stay—his love to you! Lord, madam, has he not spoke yet plain enough?

Alith. Yes, indeed, I should think so.

Spark. Well then, by the world, a man can't speak civilly to a woman now, but presently she says, he makes love to her. Nay, madam, you shall stay, with your pardon, since you have not yet understood him, till he has made an éclaircissement of his love to you, that is, what kind of love it is. Answer to thy catechism, friend; do you love my mistress here?

Har. Yes, I wish she would not doubt it.

Spark. But how do you love her?

Har. With all my soul.

Alith. I thank him, methinks he speaks plain enough now.

Spark. [*to* Alithea]. You are out still.—But with what kind of love, Harcourt?

Har. With the best and the truest love in the world.

Spark. Look you there then, that is with no matrimonial love, I'm sure.

Alith. How's that? do you say matrimonial love is not best?

Spark. 'Gad, I went too far ere I was aware. But speak for thyself, Harcourt, you said you would not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, madam, e'en take him for Heaven's sake.

Spark. Look you there, madam.

Har. Who should in all justice be yours, he that loves you most.

[*Claps his hand on his breast.*

Alith. Look you there, Mr. Sparkish, who's that?

Spark. Who should it be?—Go on, Harcourt.

Har. Who loves you more than women titles, or fortune fools. [*Points at* Sparkish.

Spark. Look you there, he means me still, for he points at me.

Alith. Ridiculous!

Har. Who can only match your faith and constancy in love.

Spark. Ay.

Har. Who knows, if it be possible, how to value so much beauty and virtue.

Spark. Ay.

Har. Whose love can no more be equalled in the world, than that heavenly form of yours.

Spark. No.

Har. Who could no more suffer a rival than your absence, and yet could no more suspect your virtue than his own constancy in his love to you.

Spark. No.

Har. Who, in fine, loves you better than his eyes, that first made him love you.

Spark. Ay—Nay, madam, faith, you shan't go till——

Alith. Have a care, lest you make me stay too long.

Spark. But till he has saluted you; that I may be assured you are friends, after his honest advice and declaration. Come, pray, madam, be friends with him.

Enter Master Pinchwife, Mrs. Pinchwife.

Alith. You must pardon me, sir, that I am not yet so obedient to you.

Pinch. What, invite your wife to kiss men? Monstrous! are you not ashamed? I will never forgive you.

Spark. Are you not ashamed, that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me, I am a man of honor, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir——

Pinch. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.

Spark. He is an humble, menial friend, such as reconciles the differences of the marriage bed; you know man and wife do not always agree; I design him for that use, therefore would have him well with my wife.

Pinch. A menial friend!—you will get a great many menial friends, by showing your wife as you do.

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't, as I have to show fine clothes at a play-house, the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

Pinch. He that shows his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love; loving alone is as dull as eating alone. Is it not a frank age? and I am a frank person; and to tell you the truth, it may be, I love to have rivals in a wife; they make her seem to a man still but as a kept mistress; and so good night, for I must to Whitehall.—Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep if you can: for to-morrow you know I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt. [*Exit* Sparkish.

Har. Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier with a canonical gentleman than Mr. Sparkish's.

Pinch. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her, sir.

[*Coming between* Alithea *and* Harcourt.

Har. Must, sir?

Pinch. Yes, sir, she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, sir—for I must be her servant, sir.—Madam——

Pinch. Come away, sister, we had been gone, if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Enter Horner, Dorilant *to them.*

Horn. How now, Pinchwife!

Pinch. Your servant.

Horn. What! I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Pinch. I have business, sir, and must mind it; your business is pleasure; therefore you and I must go different ways.

Horn. Well, you may go on, but this pretty young gentleman——

[*Takes hold of* Mrs. Pinchwife.

Har. The lady——

Dor. And the maid——

Horn. Shall stay with us; for I suppose their business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Pinch. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so sillily! yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. [*Aside.*

Alith. Pray, let us go, sir.

Pinch. Come, come——

Horn. [*to* Mrs. Pinchwife]. Had you not rather stay with us?—Prithee, Pinchwife, who is this pretty young gentleman?

Pinch. One to whom I'm a guardian. —[*Aside.*] I wish I could keep her out of your hands.

Horn. Who is he? I never saw anything so pretty in all my life.

Pinch. Pshaw! do not look upon him so much, he's a poor bashful youth; you'll put him out of countenance.—Come away, brother. [*Offers to take her away.*

Horn. O, your brother!

Pinch. Yes, my wife's brother.—Come, come, she'll stay supper for us.

Horn. I thought so, for he is very like her I saw you at the play with, whom I told you I was in love with.

Mrs. Pinch. [*aside*]. O jeminy! is that he that was in love with me? I am glad on't, I vow, for he's a curious fine gentleman, and I love him already, too.—[*To* Pinchwife.] Is this he, bud?

Pinch. Come away, come away.

[*To his Wife.*

Horn. Why, what haste are you in? why won't you let me talk with him?

Pinch. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent, and I would not have him debauched for anything in the world.—[*Aside.*] How she gazes on him! the devil!

Horn. Harcourt, Dorilant, look you here, this is the likeness of that dowdy he told us of, his wife; did you ever see a lovelier creature? The rogue has reason to be jealous of his wife, since she is like him, for she would make all that see her in love with her.

Har. And, as I remember now, she is as like him here as can be.

Dor. She is indeed very pretty, if she be like him.

Horn. Very pretty? a very pretty commendation!—she is a glorious creature, beautiful beyond all things I ever beheld.

Pinch. So, so.

Har. More beautiful than a poet's first mistress of imagination.

Horn. Or another man's last mistress of flesh and blood.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, now you jeer, sir; pray don't jeer me.

Pinch. Come, come.—[*Aside.*] By Heavens, she'll discover herself!

Horn. I speak of your sister, sir.

Pinch. Ay, but saying she was handsome, if like him, made him blush.—[*Aside.*] I am upon a rack!

Horn. Methinks he is so handsome he should not be a man.

Pinch. [*aside*]. O, there 'tis out! he has discovered her! I am not able to suffer any longer.—[*To his Wife.*] Come, come away, I say.

Horn. Nay, by your leave, sir, he shall not go yet.—[*Aside to them.*] Harcourt, Dorilant, let us torment this jealous rogue a little.

Har. Dor. How?

Horn. I'll show you.

Pinch. Come, pray let him go, I cannot stay fooling any longer; I tell you his sister stays supper for us.

Horn. Does she? Come then, we'll all go sup with her and thee.

Pinch. No, now I think on't, having stayed so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—[*Aside.*] I wish she and I were well out of their hands.—[*To his Wife.*] Come, I must rise early to-morrow, come.

Horn. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Mrs. Pinch. Thank you heartily, sir.

Pinch. [*aside*]. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me.—[*Aloud.*] He is something more civil to you, for your kindness to his sister, than I am, it seems.

Horn. Tell her, dear sweet little gentleman, for all your brother there, that you have revived the love I had for her at first sight in the playhouse.

Mrs. Pinch. But did you love her indeed, and indeed?

Pinch. [*aside*]. So, so.—[*Aloud.*] Away, I say.

Horn. Nay, stay.—Yes, indeed, and indeed, pray do you tell her so, and give her this kiss from me. [*Kisses her.*

Pinch. [*aside*]. O Heavens! what do I suffer? Now 'tis too plain he knows her, and yet——

Horn. And this, and this——

[*Kisses her again.*

Mrs. Pinch. What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.

Pinch. [*aside*]. So, there, 'tis out.—[*Aloud.*] Come, I cannot, nor will stay any longer.

Horn. Nay, they shall send your lady a kiss too. Here, Harcourt, Dorilant, will you not? [*They kiss her.*

Pinch. [*aside*]. How! do I suffer this? Was I not accusing another just now for this rascally patience, in permitting his wife to be kissed before his face? Ten thousand ulcers gnaw away their lips.—[*Aloud.*] Come, come.

Horn. Good night, dear little gentleman; madam, good night; farewell, Pinchwife.—[*Apart to* HARCOURT *and* DORILANT.] Did not I tell you I would raise his jealous gall?

[*Exeunt* HORNER, HARCOURT, *and* DORILANT.

Pinch. So, they are gone at last; stay, let me see first if the coach be at this door. [*Exit.*

HORNER, HARCOURT, *and* DORILANT *return.*

Horn. What, not gone yet? Will you be sure to do as I desired you, sweet sir?

Mrs. Pinch. Sweet sir, but what will you give me then?

Horn. Anything. Come away into the next walk. [*Exit, haling away* MRS. PINCHWIFE.

Alith. Hold! hold! what d'ye do?

Lucy. Stay, stay, hold——

Har. Hold, madam, hold, let him present him—he'll come presently; nay, I will never let you go till you answer my question.

Lucy. For God's sake, sir, I must follow 'em.

[ALITHEA, LUCY, *struggling with* HARCOURT *and* DORILANT.

Dor. No, I have something to present you with too, you shan't follow them.

PINCHWIFE *returns.*

Pinch. Where?—how—what's become of?—gone!—whither?

Lucy. He's only gone with the gentleman, who will give him something, an't please your worship.

Pinch. Something!—give him something, with a pox!—where are they?

Alith. In the next walk only, brother.

Pinch. Only, only! where, where?

[*Exit* PINCHWIFE *and returns presently, then goes out again.*

Har. What's the matter with him? why so much concerned? But, dearest madam——

Alith. Pray let me go, sir; I have said and suffered enough already.

Har. Then you will not look upon, nor pity, my sufferings?

Alith. To look upon 'em, when I cannot help 'em, were cruelty, not pity; therefore, I will never see you more.

Har. Let me then, madam, have my privilege of a banished lover, complaining or railing, and giving you but a farewell reason why, if you cannot condescend to marry

me, you should not take that wretch, my rival.

Alith. He only, not you, since my honor is engaged so far to him, can give me a reason why I should not marry him; but if he be true, and what I think him to me, I must be so to him. Your servant, sir.

Har. Have women only constancy when 'tis a vice, and, like Fortune, only true to fools?

Dor. Thou sha't not stir, thou robust creature; you see I can deal with you, therefore you should stay the rather, and be kind.

[*To* LUCY, *who struggles to get from him.*

Enter PINCHWIFE.

Pinch. Gone, gone, not to be found! quite gone! ten thousand plagues go with 'em! Which way went they?

Alith. But into t'other walk, brother.

Lucy. Their business will be done presently sure, an't please your worship; it can't be long in doing, I'm sure on't.

Alith. Are they not there?

Pinch. No, you know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family, which you do not dishonor enough yourself you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of bawds!

Alith. Good brother——

Pinch. Damned, damned sister!

Alith. Look you here, she's coming.

Enter MRS. PINCHWIFE *in man's clothes, running, with her hat under her arm, full of oranges and dried fruit,* HORNER *following.*

Mrs. Pinch. O dear bud, look you here what I have got, see!

Pinch. And what I have got here too, which you can't see.

[*Aside, rubbing his forehead.*

Mrs. Pinch. The fine gentleman has given me better things yet.

Pinch. Has he so?—[*Aside.*] Out of breath and colored!—I must hold yet.

Horn. I have only given your little brother an orange, sir.

Pinch. [*to* HORNER]. Thank you, sir.—[*Aside.*] You have only squeezed my orange, I suppose, and given it me again; yet I must have a city patience.—[*To his Wife.*] Come, come away.

Mrs. Pinch. Stay, till I have put up my fine things, bud.

Enter SIR JASPER FIDGET.

Sir Jasp. O, Master Horner, come, come, the ladies stay for you; your mistress, my wife, wonders you make not more haste to her.

Horn. I have stayed this half hour for you here, and 'tis your fault I am not now with your wife.

Sir Jasp. But, pray, don't let her know so much; the truth on't is, I was advancing a certain project to his majesty about—I'll tell you.

Horn. No, let's go, and hear it at your house. Good night, sweet little gentleman; one kiss more, you'll remember me now, I hope.

[*Kisses her.*

Dor. What, Sir Jasper, will you separate friends? He promised to sup with us, and if you take him to your house, you'll be in danger of our company too.

Sir Jasp. Alas! gentlemen, my house is not fit for you; there are none but civil women there, which are not for your turn. He, you know, can bear with the society of civil women now, ha! ha! ha! besides, he's one of my family—he's—he! he! he!

Dor. What is he?

Sir Jasp. Faith, my eunuch, since you'll have it; he! he! he!

[*Exeunt* SIR JASPER FIDGET *and* HORNER.

Dor. I rather wish thou wert his or my cuckold. Harcourt, what a good cuckold is lost there for want of a man to make him one? Thee and I cannot have Horner's privilege, who can make use of it.

Har. Ay, to poor Horner 'tis like coming to an estate at threescore, when a man can't be the better for't.

Pinch. Come.

Mrs. Pinch. Presently, bud.

Dor. Come, let us go too.—[*To* ALITHEA.] Madam, your servant.—[*To* LUCY.] Good night, strapper.

Har. Madam, though you will not let me have a good day or night, I wish you one; but dare not name the other half of my wish.

Alith. Good night, sir, for ever.

Mrs. Pinch. I don't know where to put this here, dear bud, you shall eat it; nay, you shall have part of the fine gentleman's good things, or treat, as you call it, when we come home.

Pinch. Indeed, I deserve it, since I furnished the best part of it.

[*Strikes away the orange.*

The gallant treats presents, and gives the ball;
But 'tis the absent cuckold pays for all.

ACT IV

SCENE I

In PINCHWIFE'S *House in the morning.*

LUCY, ALITHEA *dressed in new clothes.*

Lucy. Well—madam, now have I dressed you, and set you out with so many ornaments, and spent upon you ounces of essence and pulvillio; and all this for no other purpose but as people adorn and perfume a corpse for a stinking second-hand grave:

such, or as bad, I think Master Sparkish's bed.

Alith. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Master Harcourt for ever from your sight; how could you be so hard-hearted?

Alith. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and kindness, I warrant.

Alith. It was so; I would see him no more because I love him.

Lucy. Hey day, a very pretty reason!

Alith. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Alith. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man than to give him your person without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Alith. I'll retrieve it for him after I am married a while.

Lucy. The woman that marries to love better, will be as much mistaken as the wencher that marries to live better. No, madam, marrying to increase love is like gaming to become rich; alas! you only lose what little stock you had before.

Alith. I find by your rhetoric you have been bribed to betray me.

Lucy. Only by his merit, that has bribed your heart, you see, against your word and rigid honor. But what a devil is this honor! 'tis sure a disease in the head, like the megrim or falling-sickness, that always hurries people away to do themselves mischief. Men lose their lives by it; women, what's dearer to 'em, their love, the life of life.

Alith. Come, pray talk you no more of honor, nor Master Harcourt; I wish the other would come to secure my fidelity to him and his right in me.

Lucy. You will marry him then?

Alith. Certainly, I have given him already my word, and will my hand too, to make it good, when he comes.

Lucy. Well, I wish I may never stick pin more, if he be not an errant natural, to t'other fine gentleman.

Alith. I own he wants the wit of Harcourt, which I will dispense withal for another want he has, which is want of jealousy, which men of wit seldom want.

Lucy. Lord, madam, what should you do with a fool to your husband? You intend to be honest, don't you? then that husbandly virtue, credulity, is thrown away upon you.

Alith. He only that could suspect my virtue should have cause to do it; 'tis Sparkish's confidence in my truth that obliges me to be so faithful to him.

Lucy. You are not sure his opinion may last.

Alith. I am satisfied, 'tis impossible for him to be jealous after the proofs I have had of him. Jealousy in a husband—Heaven defend me from it! it begets a thousand plagues to a poor woman, the loss of her honor, her quiet, and her——

Lucy. And her pleasure.

Alith. What d'ye mean, impertinent?

Lucy. Liberty is a great pleasure, madam.

Alith. I say, loss of her honor, her quiet, nay, her life sometimes; and what's as bad almost, the loss of this town; that is, she is sent into the country, which is the last ill-usage of a husband to a wife, I think.

Lucy [*aside*]. O, does the wind lie there?—[*Aloud.*] Then of necessity, madam, you think a man must carry his wife into the country, if he be wise. The country is as terrible, I find, to our young English ladies, as a monastery to those abroad; and on my virginity, I think they would rather marry a London jailer, than a high sheriff of a county, since neither can stir from his employment. Formerly women of wit married fools for a great estate, a fine seat, or the like; but now 'tis for a pretty seat only in Lincoln's Inn Fields, St. James's Fields, or the Pall Mall.

Enter to them Sparkish, *and* Harcourt, *dressed like a Parson.*

Spark. Madam, your humble servant, a happy day to you, and to us all.

Har. Amen.

Alith. Who have we here?

Spark. My chaplain, faith—O madam, poor Harcourt remembers his humble service to you; and, in obedience to your last commands, refrains coming into your sight.

Alith. Is not that he?

Spark. No, fy, no; but to show that he ne'er intended to hinder our match, has sent his brother here to join our hands. When I get me a wife, I must get her a chaplain, according to the custom; that is his brother, and my chaplain.

Alith. His brother!

Lucy. And your chaplain, to preach in your pulpit then—— [*Aside.*

Alith. His brother!

Spark. Nay, I knew you would not believe it.—I told you, sir, she would take you for your brother Frank.

Alith. Believe it!

Lucy. His brother! ha! ha! he! he has a trick left still, it seems. [*Aside.*

Spark. Come, my dearest, pray let us go to church before the canonical hour is past.

Alith. For shame, you are abused still.

Spark. By the world, 'tis strange now you are so incredulous.

Alith. 'Tis strange you are so credulous.

Spark. Dearest of my life, hear me. I tell you this is Ned Harcourt of Cambridge, by the world; you see he has a sneaking college look. 'Tis true he's something like his brother Frank; and they differ from each other no more than in their age, for they were twins.

Lucy. Ha! ha! he!

Alith. Your servant, sir; I cannot be so deceived, though you are. But come, let's hear, how do you know what you affirm so confidently?

Spark. Why, I'll tell you all. Frank Harcourt coming to me this morning to wish me joy, and present his service to you, I asked him if he could help me to a parson. Whereupon he told me, he had a brother in town who was in orders; and he went straight away, and sent him, you see there, to me.

Alith. Yes, Frank goes and puts on a black coat, then tells you he is Ned; that's all you have for't.

Spark. Pshaw! pshaw! I tell you, by the same token, the midwife put her garter about Frank's neck, to know 'em asunder, they were so like.

Alith. Frank tells you this too?

Spark. Ay, and Ned there too: nay, they are both in a story.

Alith. So, so; very foolish.

Spark. Lord, if you won't believe one, you had best try him by your chambermaid there; for chambermaids must needs know chaplains from other men, they are so used to 'em.

Lucy. Let's see: nay, I'll be sworn he has the canonical smirk, and the filthy clammy palm of a chaplain.

Alith. Well, most reverend doctor, pray let us make an end of this fooling.

Har. With all my soul, divine heavenly creature, when you please.

Alith. He speaks like a chaplain indeed.

Spark. Why, was there not soul, divine, heavenly, in what he said?

Alith. Once more, most impertinent black coat, cease your persecution, and let us have a conclusion of this ridiculous love.

Har. I had forgot, I must suit my style to my coat, or I wear it in vain. [*Aside.*

Alith. I have no more patience left; let us make once an end of this troublesome love, I say.

Har. So be it, seraphic lady, when your honor shall think it meet and convenient so to do.

Spark. 'Gad, I'm sure none but a chaplain could speak so, I think.

Alith. Let me tell you, sir, this dull trick will not serve your turn; though you delay our marriage, you shall not hinder it.

Har. Far be it from me, munificent patroness, to delay your marriage; I desire nothing more than to marry you presently, which I might do, if you yourself would; for my noble, good-natured, and thrice generous patron here would not hinder it.

Spark. No, poor man, not I, faith.

Har. And now, madam, let me tell you plainly nobody else shall marry you; by Heavens! I'll die first, for I'm sure I should die after it.

Lucy. How his love has made him forget his function, as I have seen it in real parsons!

Alith. That was spoken like a chaplain too? now you understand him, I hope.

Spark. Poor man, he takes it heinously to be refused; I can't blame him, 'tis putting an indignity upon him, not to be suffered; but you'll pardon me, madam, it shan't be; he shall marry us; come away, pray, madam.

Lucy. Ha! ha! he! more ado! 'tis late.

Alith. Invincible stupidity! I tell you, he would marry me as your rival, not as your chaplain.

Spark. Come, come, madam.

[*Pulling her away.*

Lucy. I pray, madam, do not refuse this reverend divine the honor and satisfaction of marrying you; for I dare say, he has set his heart upon't, good doctor.

Alith. What can you hope or design by this?

Har. I could answer her, a reprieve for a day only, often revokes a hasty doom. At worst, if she will not take mercy on me, and let me marry her, I have at least the lover's second pleasure, hindering my rival's enjoyment, though but for a time. [*Aside.*

Spark. Come, madam, 'tis e'en twelve o'clock, and my mother charged me never to be married out of the canonical hours. Come, come; Lord, here's such a deal of modesty, I warrant, the first day.

Lucy. Yes, an't please your worship, married women show all their modesty the first day, because married men show all their love the first day.

[*Exeunt* Sparkish, Alithea, Harcourt, *and* Lucy.

Scene II

The Scene changes to a Bedchamber, where appear Pinchwife *and* Mrs. Pinchwife.

Pinch. Come, tell me, I say.

Mrs. Pinch. Lord! han't I told it a hundred times over?

Pinch. [*aside*]. I would try, if in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least circumstance; for if her story be false, she is so too.—[*Aloud.*] Come, how was't, baggage?

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, what pleasure you take to hear it, sure!

Pinch. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but speak, how was't?

Mrs. Pinch. He carried me up into the house next to the Exchange.

Pinch. So, and you two were only in the room!

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, for he sent away a youth that was there, for some dried fruit, and China oranges.

Pinch. Did he so? Damn him for it—and for——

Mrs. Pinch. But presently came up the gentlewoman of the house.

Pinch. O, 'twas well she did; but what did he do whilst the fruit came?

Mrs. Pinch. He kissed me a hundred times, and told me he fancied he kissed my fine sister, meaning me, you know, whom he said he loved with all his soul, and bid me be sure to tell her so, and to desire her to be at her window, by eleven of the clock this morning, and he would walk under it at that time.

Pinch. And he was as good as his word, very punctual; a pox reward him for't.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Well, and he said if you were not within, he would come up to her, meaning me, you know, bud, still.

Pinch. [*aside*]. So—he knew her certainly; but for this confession, I am obliged to her simplicity.—[*Aloud.*] But what, you stood very still when he kissed you?

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, I warrant you; would you have had me discovered myself?

Pinch. But you told me he did some beastliness to you, as you call it; what was't?

Mrs. Pinch. Why, he put——

Pinch. What?

Mrs. Pinch. Why, he put the tip of his tongue between my lips, and so mousled me—and I said, I'd bite it.

Pinch. An eternal canker seize it, for a dog!

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither, for to say truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Pinch. The devil! you were satisfied with it then, and would do it again?

Mrs. Pinch. Not unless he should force me.

Pinch. Force you, changeling! I tell you, no woman can be forced.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, but she may sure, by such a one as he, for he's a proper, goodly, strong man; 'tis hard, let me tell you, to resist him.

Pinch. [*aside*]. So, 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive me and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love! 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. Out of Nature's hands they came plain, open, silly, and fit for slaves, as she and Heaven intended 'em; but damned Love—well—I must strangle that little monster whilst I can deal with him.—[*Aloud.*] Go fetch pen, ink, and paper out of the next room.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, bud. [*Exit.*

Pinch. Why should women have more invention in love than men? It can only be, because they have more desires, more soliciting passions, more lust, and more of the devil.

Mrs. Pinchwife *returns.*

Come, minx, sit down and write.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, dear bud, but I can't do't very well.

Pinch. I wish you could not at all.

Mrs. Pinch. But what should I write for?

Pinch. I'll have you write a letter to your lover.

Mrs. Pinch. O Lord, to the fine gentleman a letter!

Pinch. Yes, to the fine gentleman.

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, you do but jeer: sure you jest.

Pinch. I am not so merry: come, write as I bid you.

Mrs. Pinch. What, do you think I am a fool?

Pinch. [*aside*]. She's afraid I would not dictate any love to him, therefore she's unwilling.—[*Aloud.*] But you had best begin.

Mrs. Pinch. Indeed, and indeed, but I won't, so I won't.

Pinch. Why?

Mrs. Pinch. Because he's in town; you may send for him if you will.

Pinch. Very well, you would have him brought to you; is it come to this? I say, take the pen and write, or you'll provoke me.

Mrs. Pinch. Lord, what d'ye make a fool of me for? Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country? Now he's in town, and I am in town too; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Pinch. [*aside*]. So, I am glad it is no worse; she is innocent enough yet.—[*Aloud.*] Yes, you may, when your husband bids you, write letters to people that are in town.

Mrs. Pinch. O, may I so? then I'm satisfied.

Pinch. Come, begin:—"Sir"——

[*Dictates.*

Mrs. Pinch. Shan't I say, "Dear Sir?"—You know one says always something more than bare "Sir."

Pinch. Write as I bid you, or I will write whore with this penknife in your face.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, good bud—"Sir"——

[*She writes.*

Pinch. "Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loathed kisses and embraces"—Write!

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, why should I say so? You know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Pinch. Write!

Mrs. Pinch. Let me but put out "loathed."

Pinch. Write, I say!

Mrs. Pinch. Well then. [*Writes.*

Pinch. Let's see, what have you writ?—[*Takes the paper and reads.*] "Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces"—Thou impudent creature! where is "nauseous" and "loathed"?

Mrs. Pinch. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Pinch. Once more write as I'd have you, and question it not, or I will spoil thy writing with this. I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

[*Holds up the penknife.*

Mrs. Pinch. O Lord! I will.

Pinch. So—so—let's see now.—[*Reads.*] "Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loathed kisses and embraces"—go on—"yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them"—so——

[*She writes.*

Mrs. Pinch. I have writ it.

Pinch. On, then—"I then concealed myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies."—— [*She writes.*

Mrs. Pinch. So——

Pinch. "The same reason, now I am out of your hands"—— [*She writes.*

Mrs. Pinch. So——

Pinch. "Makes me own to you my unfortunate, though innocent frolic, of being in man's clothes"—— [*She writes.*

Mrs. Pinch. So——

Pinch. "That you may for evermore cease to pursue her, who hates and detests you"—— [*She writes on.*

Mrs. Pinch. So—h—— [*Sighs.*

Pinch. What, do you sigh?—"detests you—as much as she loves her husband and her honor."

Mrs. Pinch. I vow, husband, he'll ne'er believe I should write such a letter.

Pinch. What, he'd expect a kinder from you? Come, now your name only.

Mrs. Pinch. What, shan't I say "Your most faithful humble servant till death?"

Pinch. No, tormenting fiend!—[*Aside.*] Her style, I find, would be very soft.—[*Aloud.*] Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle; and write on the backside, "For Mr. Horner."

[*Exit* Pinchwife.

Mrs. Pinch. "For Mr. Horner."—So, I am glad he has told me his name. Dear Mr. Horner! but why should I send thee such a letter that will vex thee, and make thee angry with me?—Well, I will not send it.—Ay, but then my husband will kill me—for I see plainly he won't let me love Mr. Horner—but what care I for my husband?—I won't, so I won't, send poor Mr. Horner such a letter—But then my husband—but oh, what if I writ at bottom my husband made me write it?—Ay, but then my husband would see't—Can one have no shift? ah, a London woman would have had a hundred presently. Stay—what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon't too? Ay, but then my husband would see't—I don't know what to do.—But yet evads I'll try, so I will—for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Horner, come what will on't.

"Dear, sweet Mr. Horner"—[*She writes and repeats what she hath writ.*]—so—"my husband would have me send you a base, rude, unmannerly letter; but I won't"—so—"and would have me forbid you loving me; but I won't"—so—"and would have me say to you, I hate you, poor Mr. Horner; but I won't tell a lie for him"—there—"for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together"—so—"I could not help treading on your toe under the table"—so—"or rubbing knees with you, and staring in your face, till you saw me"—very well—"and then looking down, and blushing for an hour together"—so—"but I must make haste before my husband comes: and now he has taught me to write letters, you shall have longer ones from me, who am, dear, dear, poor, dear Mr. Horner, your most humble friend, and servant to command till death, —Margery Pinchwife."

Stay, I must give him a hint at bottom—so—now wrap it up just like t'other—so—now write "For Mr. Horner"—But oh now, what shall I do with it? for here comes my husband.

Enter Pinchwife.

Pinch. [*aside*]. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended a visit to me; but I fear 'twas to my wife—[*Aloud.*] What, have you done?

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Pinch. Let's see't: what d'ye tremble for? what, you would not have it go?

Mrs. Pinch. Here—[*Aside.*] No, I must not give him that: so I had been served if I had given him this.

[*He opens and reads the first letter.*

Pinch. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Mrs. Pinch. [*aside*]. Lord, what shall I do now? Nay, then I have it—[*Aloud.*] Pray let me see't. Lord, you think me so errant a fool, I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will.

[*Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*

Pinch. Nay, I believe you will learn that,

and other things too, which I would not have you.

Mrs. Pinch. So, han't I done it curiously? —[*Aside.*] I think I have; there's my letter going to Mr. Horner, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks.

Pinch. 'Tis very well; but I warrant, you would not have it go now?

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Pinch. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber, till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. —[*Exit* Mrs. Pinchwife, Pinchwife *locks the door.*] At least, 'tis fit she think so. If we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us, and fraud may be justly used with secret enemies, of which a wife is the most dangerous; and he that has a handsome one to keep, and a frontier town, must provide against treachery, rather than open force. Now I have secured all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence.

[*Holds up the letter. Exit* Pinchwife.

Scene III

The Scene changes to Horner's *Lodging.*

Quack *and* Horner.

Quack. Well, sir, how fadges the new design? have you not the luck of all your brother projectors, to deceive only yourself at last?

Horn. No, good domine doctor, I deceive you, it seems, and others too; for the grave matrons, and old, rigid husbands think me as unfit for love, as they are; but their wives, sisters, and daughters know, some of 'em, better things already.

Quack. Already!

Horn. Already, I say. Last night I was drunk with half-a-dozen of your civil persons, as you call 'em, and people of honor, and so was made free of their society and dressing-rooms for ever hereafter; and am already come to the privileges of sleeping upon their pallets, warming smocks, tying shoes and garters, and the like, doctor, already, already, doctor.

Quack. You have made good use of your time, sir.

Horn. I tell thee, I am now no more interruption to 'em, when they sing, or talk bawdy, than a little squab French page who speaks no English.

Quack. But do civil persons and women of honor drink, and sing bawdy songs?

Horn. O, amongst friends, amongst friends. For your bigots in honor are just like those in religion; they fear the eye of the world more than the eye of Heaven; and think there is no virtue but railing at vice, and no sin but giving scandal. They rail at a poor, little, kept player, and keep themselves some young, modest pulpit comedian to be privy to their sins in their closets, not to tell 'em of them in their chapels.

Quack. Nay, the truth on't is, priests, amongst the women now, have quite got the better of us lay-confessors, physicians.

Horn. And they are rather their patients; but——

Enter My Lady Fidget, *looking about her.*

Now we talk of women of honor, here comes one. Step behind the screen there, and but observe, if I have not particular privileges with the women of reputation already, doctor, already. [Quack *retires.*

Lady Fid. Well, Horner, am not I a woman of honor? you see, I'm as good as my word.

Horn. And you shall see, madam, I'll not be behind-hand with you in honor; and I'll be as good as my word too, if you please but to withdraw into the next room.

Lady Fid. But first, my dear sir, you must promise to have a care of my dear honor.

Horn. If you talk a word more of your honor, you'll make me incapable to wrong it. To talk of honor in the mysteries of love, is like talking of Heaven or the Deity in an operation of witchcraft, just when you are employing the devil: it makes the charm impotent.

Lady Fid. Nay, fy! let us not be smutty. But you talk of mysteries and bewitching to me; I don't understand you.

Horn. I tell you, madam, the word money in a mistress's mouth, at such a nick of time, is not a more disheartening sound to a younger brother, than that of honor to an eager lover like myself.

Lady Fid. But you can't blame a lady of my reputation to be chary.

Horn. Chary! I have been chary of it already, by the report I have caused of myself.

Lady Fid. Ay, but if you should ever let other women know that dear secret, it would come out. Nay, you must have a great care of your conduct; for my acquaintance are so censorious (oh, 'tis a wicked, censorious world, Mr. Horner!), I say, are so censorious and detracting that perhaps they'll talk to the prejudice of my honor, though you should not let them know the dear secret.

Horn. Nay, madam, rather than they shall prejudice your honor, I'll prejudice theirs; and, to serve you, I'll lie with 'em all, make the secret their own, and then they'll keep it. I am a Machiavel in love, madam.

Lady Fid. O, no, sir, not that way.

Horn. Nay, the devil take me, if censorious women are to be silenced any other way.

Lady Fid. A secret is better kept, I hope, by a single person than a multitude; therefore pray do not trust anybody else with it, dear, dear Mr. Horner. [*Embracing him.*

Enter Sir Jasper Fidget.

Sir Jasp. How now!

Lady Fid. [*aside*]. O my husband!—prevented—and what's almost as bad, found with my arms about another man—that will appear too much—what shall I say?—[*Aloud.*] Sir Jasper, come hither: I am trying if Mr. Horner were ticklish, and he's as ticklish as can be. I love to torment the confounded toad; let you and I tickle him.

Sir Jasp. No, your ladyship will tickle him better without me, I suppose. But is this your buying china? I thought you had been at the china-house.

Horn. [*aside*]. China-house! that's my cue, I must take it.—[*Aloud.*] A pox! can't you keep your impertinent wives at home? Some men are troubled with the husbands, but I with the wives; but I'd have you to know, since I cannot be your journeyman by night, I will not be your drudge by day, to squire your wife about, and be your man of straw, or scarecrow only to pies and jays, that would be nibbling at your forbidden fruit; I shall be shortly the hackney gentleman-usher of the town.

Sir Jasp. [*aside*]. He! he! he! poor fellow, he's in the right on't, faith. To squire women about for other folks is as ungrateful an employment, as to tell money for other folks.—[*Aloud.*] He! he! he! be'n't angry, Horner.

Lady Fid. No, 'tis I have more reason to be angry, who am left by you, to go abroad indecently alone; or, what is more indecent, to pin myself upon such ill-bred people of your acquaintance as this is.

Sir Jasp. Nay, prithee, what has he done?

Lady Fid. Nay, he has done nothing.

Sir Jasp. But what d'ye take ill, if he has done nothing?

Lady Fid. Ha! ha! ha! faith, I can't but laugh however; why, d'ye think the unmannerly toad would come down to me to the coach? I was fain to come up to fetch him, or go without him, which I was resolved not to do; for he knows china very well, and has himself very good, but will not let me see it, lest I should beg some; but I will find it out, and have what I came for yet.

Horn. [*apart to* Lady Fidget]. Lock the door, madam.—[*Exit* Lady Fidget, *and locks the door followed by* Horner *to the door.*]—[*Aloud.*] So, she has got into my chamber and locked me out. Oh the impertinency of woman-kind! Well, Sir Jasper, plain-dealing is a jewel; if ever you suffer your wife to trouble me again here, she shall carry you home a pair of horns; by my lord mayor she shall; though I cannot furnish you myself, you are sure, yet I'll find a way.

Sir Jasp. Ha! ha! he!—[*Aside.*] At my first coming in, and finding her arms about him, tickling him it seems, I was half jealous, but now I see my folly.—[*Aloud.*] He! he! he! poor Horner.

Horn. Nay, though you laugh now, 'twill be my turn ere long. Oh women, more impertinent, more cunning, and more mischievous than their monkeys, and to me almost as ugly!—Now is she throwing my things about and rifling all I have; but I'll get in to her the back way, and so rifle her for it.

Sir Jasp. Ha! ha! ha! poor angry Horner.

Horn. Stay here a little, I'll ferret her out to you presently, I warrant.

[*Exit at t'other door.*

[Sir Jasper *calls through the door to his Wife, she answers from within.*

Sir Jasp. Wife! my Lady Fidget! wife! he is coming in to you the back way.

Lady Fid. Let him come, and welcome, which way he will.

Sir Jasp. He'll catch you, and use you roughly, and be too strong for you.

Lady Fid. Don't you trouble yourself, let him if he can.

Quack. [*behind*]. This indeed I could not have believed from him, nor any but my own eyes.

Enter Mrs. Squeamish.

Mrs. Squeam. Where's this woman-hater, this toad, this ugly, greasy, dirty sloven?

Sir Jasp. [*aside*]. So, the women all will have him ugly: methinks he is a comely person, but his wants make his form contemptible to 'em; and 'tis e'en as my wife said yesterday, talking of him, that a proper handsome eunuch was as ridiculous a thing as a gigantic coward.

Mrs. Squeam. Sir Jasper, your servant: where is the odious beast?

Sir Jasp. He's within in his chamber, with my wife; she's playing the wag with him.

Mrs. Squeam. Is she so? and he's a clownish beast, he'll give her no quarter, he'll play the wag with her again, let me tell you: come, let's go help her.—What, the door's locked?

Sir Jasp. Ay, my wife locked it.

Mrs. Squeam. Did she so? let's break it open then.

Sir Jasp. No, no, he'll do her no hurt.

Mrs. Squeam. [*aside*]. But is there no other way to get in to 'em? whither goes this? I will disturb 'em.

[*Exit* Mrs. Squeamish *at another door.*

Enter Old Lady Squeamish.

Lady Squeam. Where is this harlotry, this impudent baggage, this rambling tomrigg? O Sir Jasper, I'm glad to see you here; did

you not see my vile grandchild come in hither just now?

Sir Jasp. Yes.

Lady Squeam. Ay, but where is she then? where is she? Lord, Sir Jasper, I have e'en rattled myself to pieces in pursuit of her: but can you tell what she makes here? they say below, no woman lodges here.

Sir Jasp. No.

Lady Squeam. No! what does she here then? say, if it be not a woman's lodging, what makes she here? But are you sure no woman lodges here?

Sir Jasp. No, nor no man neither, this is Mr. Horner's lodging.

Lady Squeam. Is it so, are you sure?

Sir Jasp. Yes, yes.

Lady Squeam. So; then there's no hurt in't, I hope. But where is he?

Sir Jasp. He's in the next room with my wife.

Lady Squeam. Nay, if you trust him with your wife, I may with my Biddy. They say, he's a merry harmless man now, e'en as harmless a man as ever came out of Italy with a good voice, and as pretty, harmless company for a lady, as a snake without his teeth.

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, poor man.

Enter Mrs. Squeamish.

Mrs. Squeam. I can't find 'em.—Oh, are you here, grandmother? I followed, you must know, my Lady Fidget hither; 'tis the prettiest lodging, and I have been staring on the prettiest pictures——

Enter Lady Fidget *with a piece of china in her hand, and* Horner *following.*

Lady Fid. And I have been toiling and moiling for the prettiest piece of china, my dear.

Horn. Nay, she has been too hard for me, do what I could.

Mrs. Squeam. Oh, lord, I'll have some china too. Good Mr. Horner, don't think to give other people china, and me none; come in with me too.

Horn. Upon my honor, I have none left now.

Mrs. Squeam. Nay, nay, I have known you deny your china before now, but you shan't put me off so. Come.

Horn. This lady had the last there.

Lady Fid. Yes, indeed, madam, to my certain knowledge, he has no more left.

Mrs. Squeam. O, but it may be he may have some you could not find.

Lady Fid. What, d'ye think if he had had any left, I would not have had it too? for we women of quality never think we have china enough.

Horn. Do not take it ill, I cannot make china for you all, but I will have a roll-waggon for you too, another time.

Mrs. Squeam. Thank you, dear toad.

Lady Fid. What do you mean by that promise? [*To* Horner *aside.*

Horn. Alas, she has an innocent, literal understanding. [*Apart to* Lady Fidget.

Lady Squeam. Poor Mr. Horner! he has enough to do to please you all, I see.

Horn. Ay, madam, you see how they use me.

Lady Squeam. Poor gentleman, I pity you.

Horn, I thank you, madam: I could never find pity, but from such reverend ladies as you are; the young ones will never spare a man.

Mrs. Squeam. Come, come, beast, and go dine with us; for we shall want a man at ombre after dinner.

Horn. That's all their use of me, madam, you see.

Mrs. Squeam. Come, sloven, I'll lead you, to be sure of you. [*Pulls him by the cravat.*

Lady Squeam. Alas, poor man, how she tugs him! Kiss, kiss her; that's the way to make such nice women quiet.

Horn. No, madam, that remedy is worse than the torment; they know I dare suffer anything rather than do it.

Lady Squeam. Prithee kiss her, and I'll give you her picture in little, that you admired so last night; prithee do.

Horn. Well, nothing but that could bribe me: I love a woman only in effigy and good painting, as much as I hate them.—I'll do't, for I could adore the devil well painted.

[*Kisses* Mrs. Squeamish.

Mrs. Squeam. Foh, you filthy toad! nay, now I've done jesting.

Lady Squeam. Ha! ha! ha! I told you so.

Mrs. Squeam. Foh! a kiss of his——

Sir Jasp. Has no more hurt in't than one of my spaniel's.

Mrs. Squeam. Nor no more good neither.

Quack. I will now believe anything he tells me. [*Behind.*

Enter Pinchwife.

Lady Fid. O lord, here's a man! Sir Jasper, my mask, my mask! I would not be seen here for the world.

Sir Jasp. What, not when I am with you?

Lady Fid. No, no, my honor—let's be gone.

Mrs. Squeam. Oh grandmother, let's be gone; make haste, make haste, I know not how he may censure us.

Lady Fid. Be found in the lodging of anything like a man!—Away.

[*Exeunt* Sir Jasper Fidget, Lady Fidget, Old Lady Squeamish, Mrs. Squeamish.

Quack. What's here? another cuckold? he

looks like one, and none else sure have any business with him. [*Behind.*

Horn. Well, what brings my dear friend hither?

Pinch. Your impertinency.

Horn. My impertinency!—why, you gentlemen that have got handsome wives, think you have a privilege of saying anything to your friends, and are as brutish as if you were our creditors.

Pinch. No, sir, I'll ne'er trust you any way.

Horn. But why not, dear Jack? why diffide in me thou know'st so well?

Pinch. Because I do know you so well.

Horn. Han't I been always thy friend, honest Jack, always ready to serve thee, in love or battle, before thou wert married, and am so still?

Pinch. I believe so, you would be my second now, indeed.

Horn. Well then, dear Jack, why so unkind, so grum, so strange to me? Come, prithee, kiss me, dear rogue: gad, I was always, I say, and am still as much thy servant as——

Pinch. As I am yours, sir. What, you would send a kiss to my wife, is that it?

Horn. So, there 'tis—a man can't show his friendship to a married man, but presently he talks of his wife to you. Prithee, let thy wife alone, and let thee and I be all one, as we were wont. What, thou art as shy of my kindness as a Lombard Street alderman of a courtier's civility at Locket's!

Pinch. But you are over-kind to me, as kind as if I were your cuckold already; yet I must confess you ought to be kind and civil to me, since I am so kind, so civil to you, as to bring you this: look you there, sir. [*Delivers him a letter.*

Horn. What is't?

Pinch. Only a love-letter, sir.

Horn. From whom?—how! this is from your wife—hum—and hum—— [*Reads.*

Pinch. Even from my wife, sir: am I not wondrous kind and civil to you now too?—[*Aside.*] But you'll not think her so.

Horn. Ha! is this a trick of his or hers? [*Aside.*

Pinch. The gentleman's surprised I find.—What, you expected a kinder letter?

Horn. No faith, not I, how could I?

Pinch. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did. A man so well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at first sight or opportunity.

Horn. [*aside*]. But what should this mean? Stay, the postscript.—[*Reads aside.*] "Be sure you love me, whatsoever my husband says to the contrary, and let him not see this, lest he should come home and pinch me, or kill my squirrel."—It seems he knows not what the letter contains.

Pinch. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Horn. Faith, I can't help it.

Pinch. Now, I think I have deserved your infinite friendship and kindness, and have showed myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant?

Horn. Ay, the devil take me, art thou, the most obliging, kind friend and husband in the world, ha! ha!

Pinch. Well, you may be merry, sir; but in short I must tell you, sir, my honor will suffer no jesting.

Horn. What dost thou mean?

Pinch. Does the letter want a comment? Then, know, sir, though I have been so civil a husband, as to bring you a letter from my wife, to let you kiss and court her to my face, I will not be a cuckold, sir, I will not.

Horn. Thou art mad with jealousy. I never saw thy wife in my life but at the play yesterday, and I know not if it were she or no. I court her, kiss her!

Pinch. I will not be a cuckold, I say; there will be danger in making me a cuckold.

Horn. Why, wert thou not well cured of thy last clap?

Pinch. I wear a sword.

Horn. It should be taken from thee, lest thou shouldst do thyself a mischief with it; thou art mad, man.

Pinch. As mad as I am, and as merry as you are, I must have more reason from you ere we part. I say again, though you kissed and courted last night my wife in man's clothes, as she confesses in her letter——

Horn. Ha! [*Aside.*

Pinch. Both she and I say, you must not design it again, for you have mistaken your woman, as you have done your man.

Horn. [*aside*]. O—I understand something now—[*Aloud.*] Was that thy wife! Why wouldst thou not tell me 'twas she? Faith, my freedom with her was your fault, not mine.

Pinch. Faith, so 'twas. [*Aside.*

Horn. Fy! I'd never do't to a woman before her husband's face, sure.

Pinch. But I had rather you should do't to my wife before my face, than behind my back; and that you shall never do.

Horn. No—you will hinder me.

Pinch. If I would not hinder you, you see by her letter she would.

Horn. Well, I must e'en acquiesce then, and be contented with what she writes.

Pinch. I'll assure you 'twas voluntarily writ; I had no hand in't you may believe me.

Horn. I do believe thee, faith.

Pinch. And believe her too, for she's an innocent creature, has no dissembling in her: and so fare you well, sir.

Horn. Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her, I will obey her

letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't; and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her, and you.

Pinch. Well then, fare you well; and play with any man's honor but mine, kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome.

[*Exit* Mr. Pinchwife.

Horn. Ha! ha! ha! doctor.

Quack. It seems, he has not heard the report of you, or does not believe it.

Horn. Ha! ha!—now, doctor, what think you?

Quack. Pray let's see the letter—hum—"for—dear—love you——" [*Reads the letter.*

Horn. I wonder how she could contrive it! What say'st thou to't? 'tis an original.

Quack. So are your cuckolds, too, originals: for they are like no other common cuckolds, and I will henceforth believe it not impossible for you to cuckold the Grand Signior amidst his guards of eunuchs, that I say.

Horn. And I say for the letter, 'tis the first love-letter that ever was without flames, darts, fates, destinies, lying and dissembling in't.

Enter Sparkish *pulling in* Mr. Pinchwife.

Spark. Come back, you are a pretty brother-in-law, neither go to church nor to dinner with your sister bride!

Pinch. My sister denies her marriage, and you see is gone away from you dissatisfied.

Spark. Pshaw! upon a foolish scruple, that our parson was not in lawful orders, and did not say all the common-prayer; but 'tis her modesty only I believe. But let women be never so modest the first day, they'll be sure to come to themselves by night, and I shall have enough of her then. In the meantime, Harry Horner, you must dine with me: I keep my wedding at my aunt's in the Piazza.

Horn. Thy wedding! what stale maid has lived to despair of a husband, or what young one of a gallant?

Spark. O, your servant, sir—this gentleman's sister then,—no stale maid.

Horn. I'm sorry for't.

Pinch. How comes he so concerned for her? [*Aside.*

Spark. You sorry for't? why, do you know any ill by her?

Horn. No, I know none but by thee; 'tis for her sake, not yours, and another man's sake that might have hoped, I thought.

Spark. Another man! another man! what is his name?

Horn. Nay, since 'tis past, he shall be nameless.—[*Aside.*] Poor Harcourt! I am sorry thou hast missed her.

Pinch. He seems to be much troubled at the match. [*Aside.*

Spark. Prithee, tell me—Nay, you shan't go, brother.

Pinch. I must of necessity, but I'll come to you to dinner. [*Exit* Pinchwife.

Spark. But, Harry, what, have I a rival in my wife already? But with all my heart, for he may be of use to me hereafter; for though my hunger is now my sauce, and I can fall on heartily without, the time will come when a rival will be as good sauce for a married man to a wife, as an orange to veal.

Horn. O thou damned rogue! thou hast set my teeth on edge with thy orange.

Spark. Then let's to dinner—there I was with you again. Come.

Horn. But who dines with thee?

Spark. My friends and relations, my brother Pinchwife, you see, of your acquaintance.

Horn. And his wife?

Spark. No, 'gad, he'll ne'er let her come amongst us good fellows; your stingy country coxcomb keeps his wife from his friends, as he does his little firkin of ale, for his own drinking, and a gentleman can't get a smack on't; but his servants, when his back is turned, broach it at their pleasures, and dust it away, ha! ha! ha!—'Gad, I am witty, I think, considering I was married to-day, by the world; but come——

Horn. No, I will not dine with you, unless you can fetch her too.

Spark. Pshaw! what pleasure canst thou have with women now, Harry?

Horn. My eyes are not gone; I love a good prospect yet, and will not dine with you unless she does too; go fetch her, therefore, but do not tell her husband 'tis for my sake.

Spark. Well, I'll go try what I can do; in the meantime, come away to my aunt's lodging, 'tis in the way to Pinchwife's.

Horn. The poor woman has called for aid, and stretched forth her hand, doctor; I cannot but help her over the pale out of the briars. [*Exeunt* Sparkish, Horner, Quack.

Scene IV

The Scene changes to Pinchwife's *House.*

Mrs. Pinchwife *alone, leaning on her elbow.—A table, pen, ink, and paper.*

Mrs. Pinch. Well, 'tis e'en so, I have got the London disease they call love; I am sick of my husband, and for my gallant. I have heard this distemper called a fever, but methinks 'tis liker an ague; for when I think of my husband, I tremble, and am in a cold sweat, and have inclinations to vomit; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Horner, my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed; and, as in other fevers, my own cham-

ber is tedious to me, and I would fain be removed to his, and then methinks I should be well. Ah, poor Mr. Horner! Well, I cannot, will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like anything. Oh sick, sick!

[*Takes the pen and writes.*

Enter Pinchwife, *who seeing her writing, steals softly behind her and looking over her shoulder, snatches the paper from her.*

Pinch. What, writing more letters?

Mrs. Pinch. O Lord, bud, why d'ye fright me so?

[*She offers to run out; he stops her, and reads.*

Pinch. How's this? nay, you shall not stir, madam:—"Dear, dear, dear Mr. Horner"—very well—I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let us see't. "First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done, had not you said first you loved me so extremely, which if you do, you will never suffer me to lie in the arms of another man whom I loathe, nauseate, and detest."—Now you can write these filthy words. But what follows?—"Therefore, I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice, but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do; but you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our——" [*The letter concludes.*] what is to follow "our"?—speak, what—our journey into the country I suppose—Oh woman, damned woman! and Love, damned Love, their old tempter! for this is one of his miracles; in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind, those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before; nay, what is more than all, make these dough-baked, senseless, indocile animals, women, too hard for us their politic lords and rulers, in a moment. But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together. [*Draws his sword.*

Mrs. Pinch. O Lord, O Lord, you are such a passionate man, bud!

Enter Sparkish.

Spark. How now, what's here to do?

Pinch. This fool here now!

Spark. What! drawn upon your wife? You should never do that, but at night in the dark, when you can't hurt her. This is my sister-in-law, is it not? ay, faith, e'en our country Margery [*pulls aside her handkerchief*]; one may know her. Come, she and you must go dine with me; dinner's ready, come. But where's my wife? is she not come home yet? where is she?

Pinch. Making you a cuckold; 'tis that they all do, as soon as they can.

Spark. What, the wedding-day? no, a wife that designs to make a cully of her husband will be sure to let him win the first stake of love, by the world. But come, they stay dinner for us: come, I'll lead down our Margery.

Mrs. Pinch. No—sir, go, we'll follow you.

Spark. I will not wag without you.

Pinch. This coxcomb is a sensible torment to me amidst the greatest in the world. [*Aside.*

Spark. Come, come, Madam Margery.

Pinch. No; I'll lead her my way: what, would you treat your friends with mine, for want of your own wife?—[*Leads her to t'other door, and locks her in and returns.*] I am contented my rage should take breath—— [*Aside.*

Spark. I told Horner this.

Pinch. Come now.

Spark. Lord, how shy you are of your wife! but let me tell you, brother, we men of wit have amongst us a saying, that cuckolding, like the small-pox, comes with a fear; and you may keep your wife as much as you will out of danger of infection, but if her constitution incline her to't, she'll have it sooner or later, by the world, say they.

Pinch. [*aside*]. What a thing is a cuckold, that every fool can make him ridiculous! —[*Aloud.*] Well, sir—but let me advise you, now you are come to be concerned, because you suspect the danger, not to neglect the means to prevent it, especially when the greatest share of the malady will light upon your own head, for

Hows'e'er the kind wife's belly comes to swell,
The husband breeds for her, and first is ill.

ACT V

Scene I

Mr. Pinchwife's *House.*

Enter Mr. Pinchwife *and* Mrs. Pinchwife. *A table and candle.*

Pinch. Come, take the pen and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle, I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve.—[*Lays his hand on his sword.*] Write what was to follow—let's see—"You must make haste, and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out

of your reach, for I can defer no longer our"—What follows "our"?

Mrs. Pinch. Must all out, then, bud?—Look you there, then.

[Mrs. Pinchwife *takes the pen and writes.*

Pinch. Let's see—"For I can defer no longer our—wedding—Your slighted Alithea."—What's the meaning of this? my sister's name to't? speak, unriddle.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, indeed, bud.

Pinch. But why her name to't? speak—speak, I say.

Mrs. Pinch. Ay, but you'll tell her then again. If you would not tell her again——

Pinch. I will not:—I am stunned, my head turns round.—Speak.

Mrs. Pinch. Won't you tell her, indeed, and indeed?

Pinch. No; speak, I say.

Mrs. Pinch. She'll be angry with me; but I had rather she should be angry with me than you, bud; and, to tell you the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Pinch. [*aside*]. Ha! I thought the style was somewhat better than her own.—[*Aloud.*] But how could she come to you to teach you, since I had locked you up alone?

Mrs. Pinch. O, through the key-hole, bud.

Pinch. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself?

Mrs. Pinch. Why, she said because—for I was unwilling to do it——

Pinch. Because what—because?

Mrs. Pinch. Because, lest Mr. Horner should be cruel, and refuse her; or vain afterwards, and show the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being hers.

Pinch. [*aside*]. How's this? Ha!—then I think I shall come to myself again.—This changeling could not invent this lie: but if she could, why should she? she might think I should soon discover it.—Stay—now I think on't too, Horner said he was sorry she had married Sparkish; and her disowning her marriage to me makes me think she has evaded it for Horner's sake: yet why should she take this course? But men in love are fools; women may well be so—[*Aloud.*] But hark you, madam, your sister went out in the morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Mrs. Pinch. Alack-a-day, she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Pinch. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Mrs. Pinch. [*aside*]. O Lord, then she'll discover all!—[*Aloud.*] Pray hold, bud; what, d'ye mean to discover me? she'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Pinch. I must speak with her, to know whether Horner ever made her any promise, and whether she be married to Sparkish or no.

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, dear bud, don't, till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else.

Pinch. Go then, and bid her come out to me.

Mrs. Pinch. Yes, yes, bud.

Pinch. Let me see——

Mrs. Pinch. [*aside*]. I'll go, but she is not within to come to him: I have just got time to know of Lucy her maid, who first set me on work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wit's end.

[*Exit* Mrs. Pinchwife.

Pinch. Well, I resolve it, Horner shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure. I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Mrs. Pinchwife *returns.*

Mrs. Pinch. O Lord, bud! I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Pinch. Won't she come hither?

Mrs. Pinch. No, no. Alack-a-day, she's ashamed to look you in the face: and she says, if you go in to her, she'll run away downstairs, and shamefully go herself to Mr. Horner, who has promised her marriage, she says; and she will have no other, so she won't.

Pinch. Did he so?—promise her marriage!—then she shall have no other. Go tell her so; and if she will come and discourse with me a little concerning the means, I will about it immediately. Go.—[*Exit* Mrs. Pinchwife.] His estate is equal to Sparkish's, and his extraction as much better than his, as his parts are; but my chief reason is, I'd rather be akin to him by the name of brother-in-law than that of cuckold.

Enter Mrs. Pinchwife.

Well, what says she now?

Mrs. Pinch. Why, she says, she would only have you lead her to Horner's lodging; with whom she first will discourse the matter before she talks with you, which yet she cannot do; for alack, poor creature, she says she can't so much as look you in the face, therefore she'll come to you in a mask. And you must excuse her, if she make you no answer to any question of yours, till you have brought her to Mr. Horner; and if you will not chide her, nor question her, she'll come out to you immediately.

Pinch. Let her come: I will not speak a word to her, nor require a word from her.

Mrs. Pinch. Oh, I forgot: besides, she says she cannot look you in the face, though

through a mask; therefore would desire you to put out the candle.

Pinch. I agree to all. Let her make haste. —There, 'tis out.—[*Puts out the candle. Exit* MRS. PINCHWIFE.] My case is something better: I'd rather fight with Horner for not lying with my sister, than for lying with my wife; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife. I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently, troublesome to their keepers; for we have as much ado to get people to lie with our sisters as to keep 'em from lying with our wives.

Enter MRS. PINCHWIFE *masked, and in hoods and scarfs, and a night-gown and petticoat of* ALITHEA'S, *in the dark.*

What, are you come, sister? let us go then. —But first, let me lock up my wife. Mrs. Margery, where are you?

Mrs. Pinch. Here, bud.

Pinch. Come hither, that I may lock you up: get you in.—[*Locks the door.*] Come, sister, where are you now?

[MRS. PINCHWIFE *gives him her hand; but when he lets her go, she steals softly on t'other side of him, and is led away by him for his sister,* ALITHEA.

SCENE II

The Scene changes to HORNER'S *Lodging.*

QUACK, HORNER.

Quack. What, all alone? not so much as one of your cuckolds here, nor one of their wives! They use to take their turns with you, as if they were to watch you.

Horn. Yes, it often happens that a cuckold is but his wife's spy, and is more upon family duty when he is with her gallant abroad, hindering his pleasure, than when he is at home with her playing the gallant. But the hardest duty a married woman imposes upon a lover is keeping her husband company always.

Quack. And his fondness wearies you almost as soon as hers.

Horn. A pox! keeping a cuckold company, after you have had his wife, is as tiresome as the company of a country squire to a witty fellow of the town, when he has got all his money.

Quack. And as at first a man makes a friend of the husband to get the wife, so at last you are fain to fall out with the wife to be rid of the husband.

Horn. Ay, most cuckold-makers are true courtiers; when once a poor man has cracked his credit for 'em, they can't abide to come near him.

Quack. But at first, to draw him in, are so sweet, so kind, so dear! just as you are to Pinchwife. But what becomes of that intrigue with his wife?

Horn. A pox! he's as surly as an alderman that has been bit; and since he's so coy, his wife's kindness is in vain, for she's a silly innocent.

Quack. Did she not send you a letter by him?

Horn. Yes; but that's a riddle I have not yet solved. Allow the poor creature to be willing, she is silly too, and he keeps her up so close——

Quack. Yes, so close, that he makes her but the more willing, and adds but revenge to her love; which two, when met, seldom fail of satisfying each other one way or other.

Horn. What! here's the man we are talking of, I think.

Enter MR. PINCHWIFE, *leading in his Wife masked, muffled, and in her Sister's gown.*

Pshaw!

Quack. Bringing his wife to you is the next thing to bringing a love-letter from her.

Horn. What means this?

Pinch. The last time, you know, sir, I brought you a love-letter; now, you see, a mistress; I think you'll say I am a civil man to you.

Horn. Ay, the devil take me, will I say thou art the civilest man I ever met with; and I have known some. I fancy I understand thee now better than I did the letter. But, hark thee, in thy ear——

Pinch. What?

Horn. Nothing but the usual question, man: is she sound, on thy word?

Pinch. What, you take her for a wench, and me for a pimp?

Horn. Pshaw! wench and pimp, paw words; I know thou art an honest fellow, and hast a great acquaintance among the ladies, and perhaps hast made love for me, rather than let me make love to thy wife.

Pinch. Come, sir, in short, I am for no fooling.

Horn. Nor I neither: therefore prithee, let's see her face presently. Make her show, man: art thou sure I don't know her?

Pinch. I am sure you do know her.

Horn. A pox! why dost thou bring her to me then?

Pinch. Because she's a relation of mine——

Horn. Is she, faith, man? then thou art still more civil and obliging, dear rogue.

Pinch. Who desired me to bring her to you.

Horn. Then she is obliging, dear rogue.

Pinch. You'll make her welcome for my sake, I hope.

Horn. I hope she is handsome enough to make herself welcome. Prithee let her unmask.

Pinch. Do you speak to her; she would never be ruled by me.

Horn. Madam—— [Mrs. Pinchwife *whispers to* Horner.] She says she must speak with me in private. Withdraw, prithee.

Pinch. [*aside*]. She's unwilling, it seems, I should know all her indecent conduct in this business.—[*Aloud.*] Well then, I'll leave you together, and hope when I am gone, you'll agree; if not, you and I shan't agree, sir.

Horn. What means the fool? if she and I agree 'tis no matter what you and I do.

[*Whispers to* Mrs. Pinchwife, *who makes signs with her hand for him to be gone.*

Pinch. In the meantime I'll fetch a parson, and find out Sparkish, and disabuse him. You would have me fetch a parson, would you not? Well then—now I think I am rid of her, and shall have no more trouble with her—our sisters and daughters, like usurers' money, are safest when put out; but our wives, like their writings, never safe, but in our closets under lock and key.

[*Exit* Mr. Pinchwife.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Sir Jasper Fidget, sir, is coming up.

[*Exit.*

Horn. Here's the trouble of a cuckold now we are talking of. A pox on him! has he not enough to do to hinder his wife's sport, but he must other women's too?—Step in here, madam. [*Exit* Mrs. Pinchwife.

Enter Sir Jasper.

Sir Jasp. My best and dearest friend.

Horn. [*aside to* Quack]. The old style, doctor.—[*Aloud.*] Well, be short, for I am busy. What would your impertinent wife have now?

Sir Jasp. Well guessed, i'faith; for I do come from her.

Horn. To invite me to supper! Tell her, I can't come: go.

Sir Jasp. Nay, now you are out, faith; for my lady, and the whole knot of the virtuous gang, as they call themselves, are resolved upon a frolic of coming to you tonight in masquerade, and are all dressed already.

Horn. I shan't be at home.

Sir Jasp. [*aside*]. Lord, how churlish he is to women!—[*Aloud.*] Nay, prithee don't disappoint 'em; they'll think 'tis my fault: prithee don't. I'll send in the banquet and the fiddles. But make no noise on't; for the poor virtuous rogues would not have it known, for the world, that they go a-masquerading; and they would come to no man's ball but yours.

Horn. Well, well—get you gone; and tell 'em, if they come, 'twill be at the peril of their honor and yours.

Sir Jasp. He! he! he!—we'll trust you for that: farewell. [*Exit* Sir Jasper.

Horn.

Doctor, anon you too shall be my guest,
But now I'm going to a private feast.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III

The Scene changes to the Piazza of Covent Garden.

Enter Sparkish *with the letter in his hand,* Pinchwife *following.*

Spark. But who would have thought a woman could have been false to me? By the world, I could not have thought it.

Pinch. You were for giving and taking liberty: she has taken it only, sir, now you find in that letter. You are a frank person, and so is she, you see there.

Spark. Nay, if this be her hand—for I never saw it.

Pinch. 'Tis no matter whether that be her hand or no; I am sure this hand, at her desire, led her to Mr. Horner, with whom I left her just now, to go fetch a parson to 'em at their desire too, to deprive you of her for ever; for it seems yours was but a mock marriage.

Spark. Indeed, she would needs have it that 'twas Harcourt himself, in a parson's habit, that married us; but I'm sure he told me 'twas his brother Ned.

Pinch. O, there 'tis out; and you were deceived, not she: for you are such a frank person. But I must be gone.—You'll find her at Mr. Horner's. Go, and believe your eyes. [*Exit* Mr. Pinchwife.

Spark. Nay, I'll to her, and call her as many crocodiles, sirens, harpies, and other heathenish names, as a poet would do a mistress who had refused to hear his suit, nay more, his verses on her.—But stay, is not that she following a torch at t'other end of the Piazza? and from Horner's certainly—'tis so.

Enter Alithea *following a torch, and* Lucy *behind.*

You are well met, madam, though you don't think so. What, you have made a short visit to Mr. Horner? but I suppose you'll return to him presently, by that time the parson can be with him.

Alith. Mr. Horner and the parson, sir!

Spark. Come, madam, no more dissembling, no more jilting; for I am no more a frank person.

Alith. How's this?

Lucy. So, 'twill work, I see. [*Aside.*

Spark. Could you find out no easy country fool to abuse? none but me, a gentleman of wit and pleasure about the town? But it was your pride to be too hard for a man of parts, unworthy false woman! false as a friend that lends a man money to lose; false as dice, who undo those that trust all they have to 'em.

Lucy. He has been a great bubble, by his similes, as they say. [*Aside.*

Alith. You have been too merry, sir, at your wedding-dinner, sure.

Spark. What, d'ye mock me too?

Alith. Or you have been deluded.

Spark. By you.

Alith. Let me understand you.

Spark. Have you the confidence (I should call it something else, since you know your guilt) to stand my just reproaches? you did not write an impudent letter to Mr. Horner? who I find now has clubbed with you in deluding me with his aversion for women, that I might not, forsooth, suspect him for my rival.

Lucy. D'ye think the gentleman can be jealous now, madam? [*Aside.*

Alith. I write a letter to Mr. Horner!

Spark. Nay, madam, do not deny it. Your brother showed it me just now; and told me likewise, he left you at Horner's lodging to fetch a parson to marry you to him: and I wish you joy, madam, joy, joy; and to him, too, much joy; and to myself more joy, for not marrying you.

Alith. [*aside*]. So, I find my brother would break off the match; and I can consent to't, since I see this gentleman can be made jealous.—[*Aloud.*] O Lucy, by his rude usage and jealousy, he makes me almost afraid I am married to him. Art thou sure 'twas Harcourt himself, and no parson, that married us?

Spark. No, madam, I thank you. I suppose, that was a contrivance too of Mr. Horner's and yours, to make Harcourt play the parson; but I would as little as you have him one now, no, not for the world. For shall I tell you another truth? I never had any passion for you till now, for now I hate you. 'Tis true, I might have married your portion, as other men of parts of the town do sometimes: and so, your servant. And to show my unconcernedness, I'll come to your wedding, and resign you with as much joy, as I would a stale wench to a new cully; nay, with as much joy as I would after the first night, if I had been married to you. There's for you; and so your servant, servant. [*Exit* Sparkish.

Alith. How was I deceived in a man!

Lucy. You'll believe then a fool may be made jealous now? for that easiness in him that suffers him to be led by a wife, will likewise permit him to be persuaded against her by others.

Alith. But marry Mr. Horner! my brother does not intend it, sure: if I thought he did, I would take thy advice, and Mr. Harcourt for my husband. And now I wish, that if there be any over-wise woman of the town, who, like me, would marry a fool for fortune, liberty, or title, first, that her husband may love play, and be a cully to all the town but her, and suffer none but Fortune to be mistress of his purse; then, if for liberty, that he may send her into the country, under the conduct of some huswifely mother-in-law; and if for title, may the world give 'em none but that of cuckold.

Lucy. And for her greater curse, madam, may he not deserve it.

Alith. Away, impertinent! Is not this my old Lady Lanterlu's?

Lucy. Yes, madam.—[*Aside.*] And here I hope we shall find Mr. Harcourt. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

The Scene changes again to Horner's *Lodging. A table, banquet, and bottles.*

Horner, Lady Fidget, Mrs. Dainty Fidget, Mrs. Squeamish.

Horn. A pox! they are come too soon—before I have sent back my new mistress. All I have now to do is to lock her in, that they may not see her. [*Aside.*

Lady Fid. That we may be sure of our welcome, we have brought our entertainment with us, and are resolved to treat thee, dear toad.

Mrs. Dain. And that we may be merry to purpose, have left Sir Jasper and my old Lady Squeamish quarrelling at home at backgammon.

Mrs. Squeam. Therefore let us make use of our time, lest they should chance to interrupt us.

Lady Fid. Let us sit then.

Horn. First, that you may be private, let me lock this door and that, and I'll wait upon you presently.

Lady Fid. No, sir, shut 'em only, and your lips for ever; for we must trust you as much as our women.

Horn. You know all vanity's killed in me; I have no occasion for talking.

Lady Fid. Now, ladies, supposing we had drank each of us our two bottles, let us speak the truth of our hearts.

Mrs. Dain. and Mrs. Squeam. Agreed.

Lady Fid. By this brimmer, for truth is nowhere else to be found—[*Aside to* Horner] not in thy heart, false man!

Horn. You have found me a true man, I'm sure. [*Aside to* Lady Fidget.

Lady Fid. [*aside to* Horner]. Not every way.—But let us sit and be merry.

[Lady Fidget *sings.*

Why should our damned tyrants oblige us to live
On the pittance of pleasure which they only give?
We must not rejoice
With wine and with noise:
In vain we must wake in a dull bed alone,
Whilst to our warm rival the bottle they're gone.
Then lay aside charms,
And take up these arms.[1]

'Tis wine only gives 'em their courage and wit;
Because we live sober, to men we submit.
If for beauties you'd pass,
Take a lick of the glass,
'Twill mend your complexions, and when they are gone,
The best red we have is the red of the grape:
Then, sisters, lay't on,
And damn a good shape.

Mrs. Dain. Dear brimmer! Well, in token of our openness and plain-dealing, let us throw our masks over our heads.

Horn. So, 'twill come to the glasses anon. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Squeam. Lovely brimmer! let me enjoy him first.

Lady Fid. No, I never part with a gallant till I've tried him. Dear brimmer! that makest our husbands short-sighted.

Mrs. Dain. And our bashful gallants bold.

Mrs. Squeam. And, for want of a gallant, the butler lovely in our eyes.—Drink, eunuch.

Lady Fid. Drink, thou representative of a husband.—Damn a husband!

Mrs. Dain. And, as it were a husband, an old keeper.

Mrs. Squeam. And an old grandmother.

Horn. And an English bawd, and a French surgeon.

Lady Fid. Ay, we have all reason to curse 'em.

Horn. For my sake, ladies?

Lady Fid. No, for our own; for the first spoils all young gallants' industry.

Mrs. Dain. And the other's art makes 'em bold only with common women.

Mrs. Squeam. And rather run the hazard of the vile distemper amongst them, than of a denial amongst us.

Mrs. Dain. The filthy toads choose mistresses now as they do stuffs, for having been fancied and worn by others.

Mrs. Squeam. For being common and cheap.

Lady Fid. Whilst women of quality, like the richest stuffs, lie untumbled, and unasked for.

Horn. Ay, neat, and cheap, and new, often they think best.

Mrs. Dain. No, sir, the beasts will be known by a mistress longer than by a suit.

Mrs. Squeam. And 'tis not for cheapness neither.

Lady Fid. No; for the vain fops will take up druggets and embroider 'em. But I wonder at the depraved appetites of witty men; they use to be out of the common road, and hate imitation. Pray tell me, beast, when you were a man, why you rather chose to club with a multitude in a common house for an entertainment, than to be the only guest at a good table.

Horn. Why, faith, ceremony and expectation are unsufferable to those that are sharp bent. People always eat with the best stomach at an ordinary, where every man is snatching for the best bit.

Lady Fid. Though he get a cut over the fingers.—But I have heard people eat most heartily of another man's meat, that is, what they do not pay for.

Horn. When they are sure of their welcome and freedom; for ceremony in love and eating is as ridiculous as in fighting: falling on briskly is all should be done on those occasions.

Lady Fid. Well then, let me tell you, sir, there is nowhere more freedom than in our houses; and we take freedom from a young person as a sign of good breeding; and a person may be as free as he pleases with us, as frolic, as gamesome, as wild as he will.

Horn. Han't I heard you all declaim against wild men?

Lady Fid. Yes; but for all that, we think wildness in a man as desirable a quality as in a duck or rabbit: a tame man! foh!

Horn. I know not, but your reputations frightened me as much as your faces invited me.

Lady Fid. Our reputation! Lord, why should you not think that we women make use of our reputation, as you men of yours, only to deceive the world with less suspicion? Our virtue is like the statesman's religion, the quaker's word, the gamester's oath, and the great man's honor,—but to cheat those that trust us.

Mrs. Squeam. And that demureness, coyness, and modesty, that you see in our faces in the boxes at plays, is as much a sign of a kind woman, as a vizard-mask in the pit.

Mrs. Dain. For, I assure you, women are least masked when they have the velvet vizard on.

Lady Fid. You would have found us modest women in our denials only.

Mrs. Squeam. Our bashfulness is only the reflection of the men's.

[1] *The glasses.*

Mrs. Dain. We blush when they are shamefaced.

Horn. I beg your pardon, ladies, I was deceived in you devilishly. But why that mighty pretence to honor?

Lady Fid. We have told you; but sometimes 'twas for the same reason you men pretend business often, to avoid ill company, to enjoy the better and more privately those you love.

Horn. But why would you ne'er give a friend a wink then?

Lady Fid. Faith, your reputation frightened us as much as ours did you, you were so notoriously lewd.

Horn. And you so seemingly honest.

Lady Fid. Was that all that deterred you?

Horn. And so expensive—you allow freedom, you say.

Lady Fid. Ay, ay.

Horn. That I was afraid of losing my little money, as well as my little time, both which my other pleasures required.

Lady Fid. Money! foh! you talk like a little fellow now: do such as we expect money?

Horn. I beg your pardon, madam, I must confess, I have heard that great ladies, like great merchants, set but the higher prices upon what they have, because they are not in necessity of taking the first offer.

Mrs. Dain. Such as we make sale of our hearts?

Mrs. Squeam. We bribed for our love? foh!

Horn. With your pardon, ladies, I know, like great men in offices, you seem to exact flattery and attendance only from your followers; but you have receivers about you, and such fees to pay, a man is afraid to pass your grants. Besides, we must let you win at cards, or we lose your hearts; and if you make an assignation, 'tis at a goldsmith's, jeweller's, or china-house; where for your honor you deposit to him, he must pawn his to the punctual cit, and so paying for what you take up, pays for what he takes up.

Mrs. Dain. Would you not have us assured of our gallants' love?

Mrs. Squeam. For love is better known by liberality than by jealousy.

Lady Fid. For one may be dissembled, the other not.—[*Aside.*] But my jealousy can be no longer dissembled, and they are telling ripe.—[*Aloud.*]—Come, here's to our gallants in waiting, whom we must name, and I'll begin. This is my false rogue.

[*Claps him on the back.*

Mrs. Squeam. How!

Horn. So, all will out now. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Squeam. Did you not tell me, 'twas for my sake only you reported yourself no man? [*Aside to* HORNER.

Mrs. Dain. Oh, wretch! did you not swear to me, 'twas for my love and honor you passed for that thing you do?

[*Aside to* HORNER.

Horn. So, so.

Lady Fid. Come, speak, ladies: this is my false villain.

Mrs. Squeam. And mine too.

Mrs. Dain. And mine.

Horn. Well then, you are all three my false rogues too, and there's an end on't.

Lady Fid. Well then, there's no remedy; sister sharers, let us not fall out, but have a care of our honor. Though we get no presents, no jewels of him, we are savers of our honor, the jewel of most value and use, which shines yet to the world unsuspected, though it be counterfeit.

Horn. Nay, and is e'en as good as if it were true, provided the world think so; for honor, like beauty now, only depends on the opinion of others.

Lady Fid. Well, Harry Common, I hope you can be true to three. Swear; but 'tis to no purpose to require your oath, for you are as often forsworn as you swear to new women.

Horn. Come, faith, madam, let us e'en pardon one another; for all the difference I find betwixt we men and you women, we forswear ourselves at the beginning of an amour, you as long as it lasts.

Enter SIR JASPER FIDGET, *and* OLD LADY SQUEAMISH.

Sir Jasp. Oh, my Lady Fidget, was this your cunning, to come to Mr. Horner without me? but you have been nowhere else, I hope.

Lady Fid. No, Sir Jasper.

Lady Squeam. And you came straight hither, Biddy?

Mrs. Squeam. Yes, indeed, lady grandmother.

Sir Jasp. 'Tis well, 'tis well; I knew when once they were thoroughly acquainted with poor Horner, they'd ne'er be from him: you may let her masquerade it with my wife and Horner, and I warrant her reputation safe.

Enter Boy.

Boy. O, sir, here's the gentleman come, whom you bid me not suffer to come up, without giving you notice, with a lady too, and other gentlemen.

Horn. Do you all go in there, whilst I send 'em away; and, boy, do you desire 'em to stay below till I come, which shall be immediately.

[*Exeunt* SIR JASPER, LADY SQUEAMISH, LADY FIDGET, MRS. DAINTY, MRS. SQUEAMISH.

Boy. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

[*Exit* HORNER *at t'other door, and returns with* MRS. PINCHWIFE.

Horn. You would not take my advice, to

be gone home before your husband came back, he'll now discover all; yet pray, my dearest, be persuaded to go home, and leave the rest to my management; I'll let you down the back way.

Mrs. Pinch. I don't know the way home, so I don't.

Horn. My man shall wait upon you.

Mrs. Pinch. No, don't you believe that I'll go at all; what, are you weary of me already?

Horn. No, my life, 'tis that I may love you long, 'tis to secure my love, and your reputation with your husband; he'll never receive you again else.

Mrs. Pinch. What care I? d'ye think to frighten me with that? I don't intend to go to him again; you shall be my husband now.

Horn. I cannot be your husband, dearest, since you are married to him.

Mrs. Pinch. O, would you make me believe that? Don't I see every day at London here, women leave their first husbands, and go and live with other men as their wives? pish, pshaw! you'd make me angry, but that I love you so mainly.

Horn. So, they are coming up—In again, in, I hear 'em.—[*Exit* MRS. PINCHWIFE.] Well, a silly mistress is like a weak place, soon got, soon lost, a man has scarce time for plunder; she betrays her husband first to her gallant, and then her gallant to her husband.

Enter PINCHWIFE, ALITHEA, HARCOURT, SPARKISH, LUCY, *and a* PARSON.

Pinch. Come, madam, 'tis not the sudden change of your dress, the confidence of your asseverations, and your false witness there, shall persuade me I did not bring you hither just now; here's my witness, who cannot deny it, since you must be confronted.—Mr. Horner, did not I bring this lady to you just now?

Horn. Now must I wrong one woman for another's sake,—but that's no new thing with me, for in these cases I am still on the criminal's side against the innocent. [*Aside.*

Alith. Pray speak, sir.

Horn. It must be so. I must be impudent, and try my luck; impudence uses to be too hard for truth. [*Aside.*

Pinch. What, you are studying an evasion or excuse for her! Speak, sir.

Horn. No, faith, I am something backward only to speak in women's affairs or disputes.

Pinch. She bids you speak.

Alith. Ah, pray, sir, do, pray satisfy him.

Horn. Then truly, you did bring that lady to me just now.

Pinch. O ho!

Alith. How, sir?

Har. How, Horner?

Alith. What mean you, sir? I always took you for a man of honor.

Horn. Ay, so much a man of honor, that I must save my mistress, I thank you, come what will on't. [*Aside.*

Spark. So, if I had had her, she'd have made me believe the moon had been made of a Christmas pie.

Lucy. Now could I speak, if I durst, and solve the riddle, who am the author of it. [*Aside.*

Alith. O unfortunate woman! A combination against my honor! which most concerns me now, because you share in my disgrace, sir, and it is your censure, which I must now suffer, that troubles me, not theirs.

Har. Madam, then have no trouble, you shall now see 'tis possible for me to love too, without being jealous; I will not only believe your innocence myself, but make all the world believe it.—[*Apart to* HORNER.] Horner, I must now be concerned for this lady's honor.

Horn. And I must be concerned for a lady's honor too.

Har. This lady has her honor, and I will protect it.

Horn. My lady has not her honor, but has given it me to keep, and I will preserve it.

Har. I understand you not.

Horn. I would not have you.

Mrs. Pinch. What's the matter with 'em all? [MRS. PINCHWIFE *peeping in behind.*

Pinch. Come, come, Mr. Horner, no more disputing; here's the parson, I brought him not in vain.

Har. No, sir, I'll employ him, if this lady please.

Pinch. How! what d'ye mean?

Spark. Ay, what does he mean?

Horn. Why, I have resigned your sister to him; he has my consent.

Pinch. But he has not mine, sir; a woman's injured honor, no more than a man's, can be repaired or satisfied by any but him that first wronged it; and you shall marry her presently, or—— [*Lays his hand on his sword.*

Enter to them MRS. PINCHWIFE.

Mrs. Pinch. O Lord, they'll kill poor Mr. Horner! besides, he shan't marry her whilst I stand by, and look on; I'll not lose my second husband so.

Pinch. What do I see?

Alith. My sister in my clothes!

Spark. Ha!

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, pray now don't quarrel about finding work for the parson, he shall marry me to Mr. Horner; for now, I believe, you have enough of me. [*To* MR. PINCHWIFE.

Horn. Damned, damned loving changeling! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Pinch. Pray, sister, pardon me for telling so many lies of you.

Horn. I suppose the riddle is plain now.

Lucy. No, that must be my work.—Good sir, hear me.

[*Kneels to* Mr. Pinchwife, *who stands doggedly with his hat over his eyes.*

Pinch. I will never hear woman again, but make 'em all silent thus——

[*Offers to draw upon his Wife.*

Horn. No, that must not be.

Pinch. You then shall go first, 'tis all one to me.

[*Offers to draw on* Horner, *stopped by* Harcourt.

Har. Hold!

Re-enter Sir Jasper Fidget, Lady Fidget, Lady Squeamish, Mrs. Dainty Fidget, Mrs. Squeamish.

Sir Jasp. What's the matter? what's the matter? pray, what's the matter, sir? I beseech you communicate, sir.

Pinch. Why, my wife has communicated, sir, as your wife may have done too, sir, if she knows him, sir.

Sir Jasp. Pshaw, with him! ha! ha! he!

Pinch. D'ye mock me, sir? a cuckold is a kind of a wild beast; have a care, sir.

Sir Jasp. No, sure, you mock me, sir. He cuckold you! it can't be, ha! ha! he! why, I'll tell you, sir—— [*Offers to whisper.*

Pinch. I tell you again, he has whored my wife, and yours too, if he knows her, and all the women he comes near; 'tis not his dissembling, his hypocrisy, can wheedle me.

Sir Jasp. How! does he dissemble? is he a hypocrite? Nay, then—how—wife—sister, is he a hypocrite?

Lady Squeam. An hypocrite! a dissembler! Speak, young harlotry, speak, how?

Sir Jasp. Nay, then—O my head too!—O thou libidinous lady!

Lady Squeam. O thou harloting harlotry! hast thou done't then?

Sir Jasp. Speak, good Horner, art thou a dissembler, a rogue? hast thou——

Horn. Sh!

Lucy. I'll fetch you off, and her too, if she will but hold her tongue.

[*Apart to* Horner.

Horn. Canst thou? I'll give thee——

[*Apart to* Lucy.

Lucy [*to* Mr. Pinchwife]. Pray have but patience to hear me, sir, who am the unfortunate cause of all this confusion. Your wife is innocent, I only culpable; for I put her upon telling you all these lies concerning my mistress, in order to the breaking off the match between Mr. Sparkish and her, to make way for Mr. Harcourt.

Spark. Did you so, eternal rotten tooth? Then, it seems, my mistress was not false to me, I was only deceived by you. Brother, that should have been, now man of conduct, who is a frank person now, to bring your wife to her lover, ha?

Lucy. I assure you, sir, she came not to Mr. Horner out of love, for she loves him no more——

Mrs. Pinch. Hold, I told lies for you, but you shall tell none for me, for I do love Mr. Horner with all my soul, and nobody shall say me nay; pray, don't you go to make poor Mr. Horner believe to the contrary; 'tis spitefully done of you, I'm sure.

Horn. Peace, dear idiot.

[*Aside to* Mrs. Pinchwife.

Mrs. Pinch. Nay, I will not peace.

Pinch. Not till I make you.

Enter Dorilant, Quack.

Dor. Horner, your servant; I am the doctor's guest, he must excuse our intrusion.

Quack. But what's the matter, gentlemen? for Heaven's sake, what's the matter?

Horn. Oh, 'tis well you are come. 'Tis a censorious world we live in; you may have brought me a reprieve, or else I had died for a crime I never committed, and these innocent ladies had suffered with me; therefore, pray satisfy these worthy, honorable, jealous gentlemen—that—— [*Whispers.*

Quack. O, I understand you; is that all?—Sir Jasper, by Heavens, and upon the word of a physician, sir——

[*Whispers to* Sir Jasper.

Sir Jasp. Nay, I do believe you truly.—Pardon me, my virtuous lady, and dear of honor.

Lady Squeam. What, then all's right again?

Sir Jasp. Ay, ay, and now let us satisfy him too. [*They whisper with* Mr. Pinchwife.

Pinch. An eunuch! Pray, no fooling with me.

Quack. I'll bring half the chirurgeons in town to swear it.

Pinch. They!—they'll swear a man that bled to death through his wounds died of an apoplexy.

Quack. Pray, hear me, sir—why, all the town has heard the report of him.

Pinch. But does all the town believe it?

Quack. Pray, inquire a little, and first of all these.

Pinch. I'm sure when I left the town, he was the lewdest fellow in't.

Quack. I tell you, sir, he has been in France since; pray, ask but these ladies and gentlemen, your friend Mr. Dorilant. Gentlemen and ladies, han't you all heard the late sad report of poor Mr. Horner?

All the Ladies. Ay, ay, ay.

Dor. Why, thou jealous fool, dost thou doubt it? he's an arrant French capon.

Mrs. Pinch. 'Tis false, sir, you shall not disparage poor Mr. Horner, for to my certain knowledge——

Lucy. O, hold!

Mrs. Squeam. Stop her mouth!

[*Aside to* LUCY.

Lady Fid. Upon my honor, sir, 'tis as true—— [*To* PINCHWIFE.

Mrs. Dain. D'ye think we would have been seen in his company?

Mrs. Squeam. Trust our unspotted reputations with him?

Lady Fid. This you get, and we too, by trusting your secret to a fool.

[*Aside to* HORNER.

Horn. Peace, madam.—[*Aside to* QUACK.] Well, doctor, is not this a good design, that carries a man on unsuspected, and brings him off safe?

Pinch. Well, if this were true—but my wife—— [*Aside.*

[DORILANT *whispers with* MRS. PINCHWIFE.

Alith. Come, brother, your wife is yet innocent, you see; but have a care of too strong an imagination, lest, like an over-concerned timorous gamester, by fancying an unlucky cast, it should come. Women and fortune are truest still to those that trust 'em.

Lucy. And any wild thing grows but the more fierce and hungry for being kept up, and more dangerous to the keeper.

Alith. There's doctrine for all husbands, Mr. Harcourt.

Har. I edify, madam, so much, that I am impatient till I am one.

Dor. And I edify so much by example, I will never be one.

Spark. And because I will not disparage my parts, I'll ne'er be one.

Horn. And I, alas! can't be one.

Pinch. But I must be one—against my will to a country wife, with a country murrain to me!

Mrs. Pinch. And I must be a country wife still too, I find; for I can't, like a city one, be rid of my musty husband, and do what I list. [*Aside.*

Horn. Now, sir, I must pronounce your wife innocent, though I blush whilst I do it; and I am the only man by her now exposed to shame, which I will straight drown in wine, as you shall your suspicion; and the ladies' troubles we'll divert with a ballad.—Doctor, where are your maskers?

Lucy. Indeed, she's innocent, sir, I am her witness; and her end of coming out was but to see her sister's wedding; and what she has said to your face of her love to Mr. Horner was but the usual innocent revenge on a husband's jealousy;—was it not, madam, speak?

Mrs. Pinch. [*aside to* LUCY *and* HORNER]. Since you'll have me tell more lies—[*Aloud.*] Yes, indeed, bud.

Pinch.

For my own sake fain I would all believe;
Cuckolds, like lovers should themselves deceive.
But—— [*Sighs.*
His honor is least safe (too late I find)
Who trusts it with a foolish wife or friend.

A Dance of Cuckolds.

Horn.

Vain fops but court and dress, and keep a pother,
To pass for women's men with one another;
But he who aims by women to be prized,
First by the men, you see, must be despised.
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MRS. KNEP.

Now you the vigorous, who daily here
O'er vizard-mask in public domineer,
And what you'd do to her, if in place where;
Nay, have the confidence to cry, "Come out!"
Yet when she says, "Lead on!" you are not stout;
But to your well-dressed brother straight turn round,
And cry, "Pox on her, Ned, she can't be sound!"
Then slink away, a fresh one to engage,
With so much seeming heat and loving rage,
You'd frighten listening actress on the stage;
Till she at last has seen you huffing come,
And talk of keeping in the tiring-room,
Yet cannot be provoked to lead her home.
Next, you Falstaffs of fifty, who beset
Your buckram maidenheads, which your friends get;
And whilst to them you of achievements boast,
They share the booty, and laugh at your cost.
In fine, you essenced boys, both old and young,
Who would be thought so eager, brisk, and strong,
Yet do the ladies, not their husbands wrong;
Whose purses for your manhood make excuse,
And keep your Flanders mares for show not use;
Encouraged by our woman's man to-day,
A Horner's part may vainly think to play;
And may intrigues so bashfully disown,
That they may doubted be by few or none;
May kiss the cards at picquet, ombre, loo,
And so be thought to kiss the lady too;
But, gallants, have a care, faith, what you do.
The world, which to no man his due will give,
You by experience know you can deceive,
And men may still believe you vigorous,
But then we women—there's no cozening us.

GEORGE ETHEREGE

THE MAN OF MODE

Among the Ethereges of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were as many Georges as among the Hanoverian Kings of the eighteenth. The name was borne not only by the father and grandfather of the dramatist, Berkshire men who settled in Bermuda, but by a very distant kinsman, the famous Oxford professor of Greek in the days of the Tudors. With this learned scholar our George, born in 1634 or 1635 in Bermuda or England, had so little affinity that his knowledge of the classics was stoutly denied by his champion Dennis. One of his early biographers, Oldys, very doubtfully allows him "some education at the University of Cambridge" as well as some early travel in France and Flanders and a period of law study at the Inns of Court. Sir Edmund Gosse in the essay on Etherege in *Seventeenth Century Studies* suggests that, from a foreign residence, chiefly in Paris during several of his younger years, he acquired a "French which in prose and verse is as fluent as his English." Later he lived in London the fast life of a member of the smart set. In his early forties he is at the Earl of Rochester's side in a fatal brawl with constables. In his fifties he recalls delightedly an unsavory escapade shared with the Earl of Dorset. Between 1677 and 1680 he married a rich widow of London, a shrewish dame, according to contemporary rhymers—merely to secure, men said, the wherewithal to buy knighthood.

Two well-accredited diplomatic experiences of George Etherege were a stay of three years (1668-1671) in Turkey as secretary to the English Ambassador, of which he renders a full report, and an even longer period (1685-1689) as envoy at Ratisbon. Away from the "dear damned distracting town," its pleasures and its wits, he deemed himself on the shores of Bosphorus as much an exile as Ovid at Pontus. Of his life in Germany, his gambling and drinking and escapades with an actress, his *Letterbook* gives a lively account, which is accompanied by a farrago of scandal about him from his vicious secretary, Hugh Hughes.

Etherege cultivates assiduously "that noble laziness of mind, which all I write makes out my just title to." Indeed a contemporary, perhaps Rochester, declares that "the crying sin of 'gentle George,' idleness, prevailed against fancy, sense, judgment, and wit." On the other hand, modern commentators

assert that his mind "throve upon idleness." "Loose wandering Etherege on wild pleasures tossed" was eternally young. "I have always by my way of living taken care to banish age from my thoughts." And near the end, he is somewhat saddened by the rumored reform of his friends, Sedley and Dorset, hitherto "true sons of Belial." He must turn to the young, whom he had revealed in his plays:—"Let us still preserve our good humor and our good nature to make us welcome near the young people who possess that plentiful estate we have pretty well run out of." Thus "gentle George," whom his acquaintance called "very affable and courteous and of a sprightly and generous temper," vindicates his name. At the end he steals away from life, like a guest from a banquet where he has been very merry. Early in 1691 he died in Paris, and his world hardly paused to take notice of his end, although his style of writing was in high favor.

"Easy Etherege" came readily into his own, because the town that he knew and loved made him its mouthpiece and spoke through him its latest word. It is this nearness to the life of society which renders his work significant. The courtier of Charles, the companion of Rochester, was admirably fitted by his training in the gay world for the recognition and revelation of social values. He knew well the thought and speech of the set to which he himself belonged, hence he could saunter into comedy from its midst, and could speak with an accent that all would recognize as authentic. He had, moreover, an ear keenly sensitive to all the modern niceties of phrase, an "easy impudent wit" and a hitherto unsuspected power of giving long life to little things. He began with an abundance of promising materials, but with no very clear idea of the end in view, for construction was never his chief concern. And the result was that surprising composite, *The Comical Revenge* or *Love in a Tub,* which so pleased the town in the midsummer of 1664. The public knew nought of George Etherege until the eager reception of his first play made him the man of the moment. The acting of the comedy "brought him as much good fortune as he could have wished." Oldys, to whom we are indebted for much of our knowledge of contemporary reactions, tells us that "the fame of this play with his lively humor, engaging conversation and refined taste in the fashionable gallantries of the town soon established him in the societies and rendered him the delight of those leading wits among the quality and gentry of chief rank and distinction who made their pleasure the chief business of their lives in that reign." Presented by an admirable cast at its first performance, it never failed to call forth general applause. As many have noted, it is an interesting medley of old and new, of traditional types and striking innovations. There is, first of all, high romance that harks back to Fletcher conveyed in heroic couplets of which Etherege is no master; hence both theme and metre soon forfeit our interest. Then enters a picaresque element, rogue drama, the scoundrelly devices of such Alsatians as the older comedy loved, already *vieux jeu* in the sixteen-sixties. So far, little that was new. There then appears the broad farce of the Dufoy passages, coarse in theme and coarse in language, but every-

where exhibiting ease and zest and the contemporary touch. And finally, in the story of Sir Frederick Frollick and the widow, the play's greatest triumph, the introduction of a new form of drama, that comedy of manners, which was to become the delight of the Restoration stage. The characters, as Shadwell said, are "good and new"; and they anticipate, in their several passages of arms, the wit-fencing of dozens of Restoration dramas. Here is our first taste of the "perfection of style," the mastery of comic phrase, which does honor to Etherege and his successors. Here, too, is "the exact picture of fashionable life with the added polish that comedy demands"; for he had found in the London of Charles II the fitting milieu of his drama. Upon the environment all depended, for he was to recognize during his later days that, in the German world of Ratisbon, "the formality was too portentous, the foppery too grave for comedy."

Etherege's second play, *She Would if She Could,* represented a great advance upon his first. Gone are the irreconcilable elements of sentimental heroics, lavish farce, and traditional roguery; and true comedy survives. All the great world was there to see when it was presented in 1667 at the Duke's Theatre in Dorset Gardens—but alas, presented so badly that few people were pleased and Pepys deemed it "a silly dull thing." But the discriminating recognized its worth. Shadwell has the authority of some of the best judges in England for saying that "it was the best comedy that has been written since the restoration of the stage." And Dennis, marking the general applause with which it was greeted fifty years later, applauds "the trueness of some of the characters and the purity, freshness and easy grace of its dialogue." "The first finished example of the new comedy of manners" (Palmer) well deserves this praise. The young girls, Ariana and Gatty, "Sly-girl and Madcap" as Sir Joslyn calls them, come and go with such swiftness through park and garden that they baffle their dazzled young lovers and call forth from the admiring old horseman fervent phrases of field and track. They are "country fillies that have breathed a course." And one of them is "a clean-limbed wench that has neither spavin, splinter, nor wind-gall." In their clever encounters with two brisk London gallants, the witty sword-crossing of lively minds, the comic style invites laughter not too heavily trammeled with thought. Less pleasing perhaps to the modern reader are the older folk, the brace of knights, Sir Joslin with his daring melodies and discords, and Sir Oliver, with a directness of speech that anticipates downright Squire Western. Voluble Lady Cockwood, "fashionable virtue coquetting as fashionable vice," from whom both husband and lover flee, gives full warrant to the play's title inasmuch as she constantly lets "I could not" wait upon "I would." Nowhere is puppetry, but gay folk drawing delightedly the full breath of life. And the background is ever vividly present, as the action "ranges up and down the plays, the Park and all the gardens" of the London of the Restoration in which Etherege and his fellows took such delight and through which Pepys wandered as through a land of enchantment.

"The Rose" and "The Bear," scenes of this play, and those who daily gathered there were wistfully recalled by the dramatist in his exile at Ratisbon.

Although Etherege's friends and admirers could not be aware that they were assisting at the birth of a new form of English comedy, they were very eager to welcome other children of his muse. The anonymous author of *A Session of the Poets* (were he Buckingham, Rochester, or Settle), who found in "gentle George" "more fancy, sense, judgment and wit" than in all other writers, blamed his crying sin, idleness, for his unpardonable silence of seven years duration. The expectant play-lovers waited not seven but nine years before they were amply rewarded by the finest product of his fancy, *The Man of Mode or Sir Fopling Flutter* in 1676. This time Etherege ran no risks with the presentations at the Duke's Theatre. In the prologue Sir Car Scroope congratulates the audience on being so richly served at home; and in the epilogue, Dryden, always the staunch friend, expresses everybody's satisfaction with the "pretty company" of Sir Fopling, "so brisk, so gay, so travelled, so refined." The dramatist sought and found the patronage of the highest in his dedication to the Duchess of York. And the end crowned the work when Betterton and his wife, Mrs. Barry, Smith and other well-known actors assumed the leading rôles.

That Etherege's play was close to the actual life of his time is evidenced by the public's identification of the chief figures. That there was large disagreement among the interpreters is strong evidence that his aim was not mere reproduction of individuals but rather that regard for the general features of foppery and affectation which results in the studied embodiment of a class in a single person. Etherege himself was deemed by some the original of Dorimant, by others the prototype of Medley or of Bellair. The majority, however, were disposed to identify Dorimant as the Earl of Rochester, Medley as Sir Charles Sedley and Beau Hewitt as Sir Fopling. But Dryden, the conscious artist, recognized that this man of genius had attained the large reality that lies in "the artistic reflexion of the London world." If the business of the comedy of manners is to ridicule pretence and affectation, Etherege had fulfilled its end in holding with urbanity and cynicism the mirror up to artifice. In presenting figures of the smart set for our amused contemplation, Etherege anticipates Congreve, who "strove to design characters which would appear ridiculous, not so much through natural folly as through affected wit." As has been often remarked by students of artificial comedy, the writer must be equipped by breeding for the recognition of the gay world of social values. Etherege is so truly a representative of the frivolity at which he laughs that he seems to strut upon his own stage. His unabashed enjoyment of the folly and futility of it all is the very antithesis of Dryden's contemptuous "chorus" of dismissal of his period in his last verses:—

"All, all of a piece throughout
Thy chase had a beast in view

Thy wars brought nothing about;
Thy lovers were all untrue,
'Tis well an old age is out
And time to begin a new."

The characters stand out in clear relief brightly adorning the page, though often painting a doubtful moral. Dorimant is at once fascinating by his wit and forbidding by his cruelty. He has been called "a marvelous erotic, a master of the technique of feminine conquest, who can pique as well as caress." Even his unhappy victim, Loveit, acknowledges his irresistibility. "I know he is a devil, but he has something of the angel yet undefaced in him, which makes him so charming and agreeable that I must love him, be he never so wicked." He catches the day with little thought of the morrow and follows his changing affections, wherever they lead, coming with infinite zest from a quarrel with an old mistress to an understanding with a new one. "Constancy at my years, 'tis not a virtue in season!" Harriet's mother who deems him "the plague, the infection, the prince of the devils in the town" is ultimately overreached by his cleverness and charm. And Harriet herself, who has him well in hand throughout, is assured of his love, although he professes to others that he is taking a wife to repair the ruins of his fortune. Of his fidelity to his bride, the hint to Bellinda intimates a doubt. Against the philanderings of this libertine with more head than heart, moralists have been moved to angry protest and from his harshness the comic spirit turns away its face. Yet in the urban circle that surrounds him a witty man is immune from judgment. Hence one hopes that he may pay penance in the despised country amid "the hateful noise of rooks."

"Bait your hook with a frog," says Izaak Walton, "but handle him tenderly as though you loved him." For "fool" write "fop." Etherege moderates his transports and restrains his satire in the portrayal of that "admirable piece of emptiness," Sir Fopling Flutter. But Dryden, in his epilogue, does not temper his praise of "this fool so nicely writ"—"such pretty company, so brisk, so gay, so traveled, so refined." He is a wonderful creation, not to know whom discredits one's journeys through comedy. His entrance is postponed until the very middle of the play, but how carefully it has been anticipated! One hears of him, off stage, as a person of "great acquired follies," who includes his own good qualities under "the character of a complete gentleman, who ought to dress well, dance well, fence well, have a genius for love letters, an agreeable voice for a chamber, be very amorous, sometimes discreet, but not over constant." Through a stay in France, Sir Fopling has come to love French shops and fashion, French airs and dances, French servants. He would send his man to dress Dorimant as "an Englishman cannot tie a ribbon." The soul of the man is in his clothes. He is heralded as a "tawdry French riband, a formal cravat," but Dorimant is prejudiced against one whose weakness is not his. Of him Dobrée says beautifully:—"He exists but as a fantasy. No disharmonies of flesh and blood disturb the delicate creation; no blast of reality dispels the

perfumery or ruffles the least hair on the inimitable perruque. To attempt to adduce a lesson from him is as fruitful as to seek a symbol in a primrose, a meaning in the contours of a cloud."

The women of the play are many, and each is quite unlike every other. Three of them are in love with Dorimant and two of these suffer from his heartlessness. Mrs. Loveit, as woman scorned, is hell's fury, tearing passion to tatters, launching "daggers, darts, and poisoned arrows" not only at the light-of-love, but at her successful rival, for she is sorely afflicted with the distemper of jealousy. Her lack of dignity and decorum has its moments of comedy, but injury and insult are so heavily heaped upon her that to a modern reader her plight offers small entertainment. Bellinda, "the little jilting baggage," engages in a plot against her friend and meets her nemesis in Dorimant's unfaith after her foolish surrender: "I knew him false and helped to make him so." At the end she wraps about her a tattered remnant of self-respect: "Take no notice of me and I shall not hate you." Harriet, vastly rich and handsome, is a charming heroine. The play offers nothing more poetic than Medley's rapturous description of her face and form. With beauty she mates "more wit than is usual in her sex and as much malice," particularly in her meetings with Dorimant, who fears that she may revenge the wrongs he has done to womanhood. She will entertain his love when "it grows strong enough to make you bear being laughed at." Her marriage promises a witty companion and happy escape from the country that she loathes. In contrast with her, another young woman, Emilia, beloved by father and son, has "a pretty sadness in her face."

One of the chief delights of the drama is its exquisite felicity of phrase. What happier illustration of a viewpoint than Sir Fopling's summary of the attributes of a gentleman! And what more comprehensive conception of the purposes of just such comedy as Etherege offers than Lady Townley's comments: "We should love wit, but for variety be able to divert ourselves with the extravagances of those who want it." Our pleasure in drama must be derived from both cleverness and clownage. There are many passages of fine fitness: the talk of Medley in the several scenes; the first appearance of Sir Fopling and the ecstatic parade of his apparel; and the dialogues of Harriet, first with Bellair when to deceive their elders they practise various poses of the game of love, and then with Dorimant, her match in lively give and take. It has been recognized that the leitmotif of the main theme, the uncertainty and frailty of love, is found in Etherege's "Song to Celia." And scattered through the play are songs pleasing in their lilting suggestion of the mood of the moment. But the lyrical quality is also present in many of the prose passages, notably at the close of the sketch of Harriet—"pretty, pouting lips, with a little moisture ever hanging on them, that look like the Provence rose fresh on the bush, ere the morning sun has quite drawn up the dew." Let us note that the editor of the *Letterbook* of Etherege, Sybil Rosenfeld, praises his "delicate, easy simple style infused with wit, raillery and grace" and remarks that "his sensual similes and impertinent sallies are of the stuff of which his comic dia-

logue are made. . . . In his most characteristic moments his exquisite phrases and delicate cadences fall gently on the ear like a plash of a fountain." Dryden pays him a flattering compliment: "I will never enter the lists in prose with the undoubted best author of it which our nation has produced."

THE MAN OF MODE;

OR

SIR FOPLING FLUTTER

PROLOGUE

By Sir Car Scroope, Baronet

Like dancers on the ropes poor poets fare,
Most perish young, the rest in danger are;
This (one would think) should make our authors wary,
But, gamester-like, the giddy fools miscarry.
A lucky hand or two so tempts 'em on,
They cannot leave off play till they're undone.
With modest fears a muse does first begin,
Like a young wench newly enticed to sin;
But tickled once with praise, by her good will,
The wanton fool would never more lie still.
'Tis an old mistress you'll meet here to-night
Whose charms you once have looked on with delight.
But now of late such dirty drabs have known ye,
A muse o'th' better sort's ashamed to own [ye].
Nature well drawn, and wit, must now give place
To gaudy nonsense and to dull grimace;
Nor is it strange that you should like so much
That kind of wit, for most of yours is such.
But I'm afraid that while to France we go,
To bring you home fine dresses, dance, and show,
The stage, like you, will but more foppish grow.
Of foreign wares, why should we fetch the scum,
When we can be so richly served at home?
For heav'n be thanked, 'tis not so wise an age
But your own follies must supply the stage.
Tho' often plowed, there's no great fear the soil
Should barren grow by the too frequent toil;
While at your doors are to be daily found

Such loads of dunghill to manure the ground.
'Tis by your follies that we players thrive,
As the physicians by diseases live;
And as each year some new distemper reigns,
Whose friendly poison helps t'increase their gains,
So among you there starts up every day
Some new, unheard-of fool for us to play.
Then, for your own sakes be not too severe,
Nor what you all admire at home, damn here;
Since each is fond of his own ugly face,
Why should you, when we hold it, break the glass?

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Mr. Dorimant, Mr. Medley, Old Bellair, Young Bellair, — *Gentlemen.*

Lady Townley, Emilia, Mrs. Loveit, Bellinda, Lady Woodvil, Harriet, *her daughter,* — *Gentlewomen.*

Pert and Busy, *waiting-women.*
A Shoemaker.
An Orange-Woman.
Three Slovenly Bullies.
Two Chairmen.
Mr. Smirk, *a parson.*
Handy, *a valet-de-chambre.*
Pages, Footmen, etc.

Scene—London.

ACT I

Scene I

A dressing-room. A table covered with a toilet; clothes laid ready.

Enter Dorimant *in his gown and slippers, with a note in his hand made up, repeating verses.*

Dorimant. Now for some ages had the pride of Spain
Made the sun shine on half the world in vain.

[*Then looking on the note*] **"For Mrs. Loveit"—What a dull, insipid thing is a billet-doux written in cold blood, after the heat of the business is over! It is a tax upon good nature which I have here been laboring to pay, and have done it, but with as much regret as ever fanatic paid the Royal Aid or church duties. 'Twill have the same fate, I know, that all my notes to her have had of late; 'twill not be thought kind enough. 'Faith, women are i'the right when they jealously examine our letters, for in them we always first discover our decay of passion.—Hey! Who waits?**

Enter Handy.

Handy. **Sir——**

Dor. **Call a footman.**

Handy. **None of 'em are come yet.**

Dor. **Dogs! Will they ever lie snoring abed till noon?**

Handy. **'Tis all one, sir; if they're up, you indulge 'em so they're ever poaching after whores all the morning.**

Dor. **Take notice henceforward who's wanting in his duty, the next clap he gets, he shall rot for an example—What vermin are those chattering without?**

Handy. **Foggy Nan, the orange-woman, and Swearing Tom, the shoemaker.**

Dor. **Go, call in that over-grown jade with the flasket of guts before her; fruit is refreshing in a morning.**

[*Exit* Handy. *Reads.*

It is not that I love you less.
Than when before your feet I lay——

Enter Orange-Woman *with* Handy.

How now, double tripe, what news do you bring?

Or.-Wom. **News! Here's the best fruit has come to town t'year; gad, I was up be-**

fore four o'clock this morning and bought all the choice i'the market.

Dor. The nasty refuse of your shop.

Or.-Wom. You need not make mouths at it; I assure you, 'tis all culled ware.

Dor. The citizens buy better on a holiday in their walk to Totnam.

Or.-Wom. Good or bad, 'tis all one; I never knew you commend anything. Lord! would the ladies had heard you talk of 'em as I have done! [*Sets down the fruit*] Here, bid your man give me an angel.

Dor. [*to* Handy]. Give the bawd her fruit again.

Or.-Wom. Well, on my conscience, there never was the like of you!—God's my life, I had almost forgot to tell you there is a young gentlewoman lately come to town with her mother, that is so taken with you.

Dor. Is she handsome?

Or.-Wom. Nay, gad, there are few finer women, I tell you but so—and a hugeous fortune, they say.—Here, eat this peach. It comes from the stone; 'tis better than any Newington y'have tasted.

Dor. [*taking the peach*]. This fine woman, I'll lay my life, is some awkward, ill-fashioned country toad who, not having above four dozen of black hairs on her head, has adorned her baldness with a large, white fruz, that she may look sparkishly in the forefront of the King's box at an old play.

Or.-Wom. Gad, you'd change your note quickly if you did but see her.

Dor. How came she to know me?

Or.-Wom. She saw you yesterday at the Change. She told me you came and fooled with the woman at the next shop.

Dor. I remember there was a mask observed me, indeed. Fooled, did she say?

Or.-Wom. Aye; I vow she told me twenty things you said, too, and acted with her head and with her body so like you——

Enter Medley.

Med. Dorimant, my life, my joy, my darling sin! how dost thou?

Or.-Wom. Lord, what a filthy trick these men have got of kissing one another!

[*She spits.*

Med. Why do you suffer this cartload of scandal to come near you and make your neighbors think you so improvident to need a bawd?

Or.-Wom. Good, now we shall have it, you did but want him to help you!—[*To* Dorimant] Come, pay me for my fruit.

Med. Make us thankful for it, huswife, bawds are as much out of fashion as gentlemen-ushers; none but old formal ladies use the one, and none but foppish old stagers employ the other. Go, you are an insignificant brandy bottle.

Dor. Nay, there you wrong her; three quarts of Canary is her business.

Or.-Wom. What you please, gentlemen.

Dor. To him! give him as good as he brings.

Or.-Wom. Hang him, there is not such another heathen in the town again, except it be the shoemaker without.

Med. I shall see you hold up your hand at the bar next sessions for murder, huswife; that shoemaker can take his oath you are in fee with the doctors to sell green fruit to the gentry, that the crudities may breed diseases.

Or.-Wom. Pray give me my money.

Dor. Not a penny! When you bring the gentlewoman hither you spoke of, you shall be paid.

Or.-Wom. The gentlewoman! the gentlewoman may be as honest as your sisters, for aught I know. Pray, pay me, Mr. Dorimant, and do not abuse me so; I have an honester way of living—you know it.

Med. Was there ever such a resty bawd!

Dor. Some jade's tricks she has, but she makes amends when she's in good humor. [*To the* Orange-Woman] Come, tell me the lady's name and Handy shall pay you.

Or.-Wom. I must not; she forbid me.

Dor. That's a sure sign she would have you.

Med. Where does she live?

Or.-Wom. They lodge at my house.

Med. Nay, then she's in a hopeful way.

Or.-Wom. Good Mr. Medley, say your pleasure of me, but take heed how you affront my house!—God's my life, in a hopeful way!

Dor. Prithee, peace! What kind of woman's the mother?

Or.-Wom. A goodly, grave gentlewoman. Lord, how she talks against the wild young men o' the town! As for your part, she thinks you an arrant devil; should she see you, on my conscience she would look if you had not a cloven foot.

Dor. Does she know me?

Or.-Wom. Only by hearsay; a thousand horrid stories have been told her of you, and she believes 'em all.

Med. By the character this should be the famous Lady Woodvil and her daughter Harriet.

Or.-Wom. The devil's in him for guessing, I think.

Dor. Do you know 'em?

Med. Both very well; the mother's a great admirer of the forms and civility of the last age.

Dor. An antiquated beauty may be allowed to be out of humor at the freedoms of the present. This is a good account of the mother; pray, what is the daughter?

Med. Why, first, she's an heiress vastly rich.

Dor. And handsome?

Med. What alteration a twelvemonth may have bred in her I know not, but a year ago she was the beautifullest creature I ever saw: a fine, easy, clean shape; light brown hair in abundance; her features regular; her complexion clear and lively; large, wanton eyes; but above all, a mouth that has made me kiss it a hundred times in imagination; teeth white and even, and pretty, pouting lips, with a little moisture ever hanging on them, that look like the Provence rose fresh on the bush, ere the morning sun has quite drawn up the dew.

Dor. Rapture! mere rapture!

Or.-Wom. Nay, gad, he tells you true, she's a delicate creature.

Dor. Has she wit?

Med. More than is usual in her sex, and as much malice. Then she's as wild as you would wish her, and has a demureness in her looks that makes it so surprising.

Dor. Flesh and blood cannot hear this and not long to know her.

Med. I wonder what makes her mother bring her up to town; an old doting keeper cannot be more jealous of his mistress.

Or.-Wom. She made me laugh yesterday; there was a judge came to visit 'em, and the old man she told me did so stare upon her, and when he saluted her, smacked so heartily. Who would think it of 'em?

Med. God a-mercy! Judge!

Dor. Do 'em right; the gentlemen of the long robe have not been wanting by their good examples to countenance the crying sin o' the nation.

Med. Come, on with your trappings; 'tis later than you imagine.

Dor. Call in the shoemaker, Handy.

Or.-Wom. Good Mr. Dorimant, pay me. Gad, I had rather give you my fruit than stay to be abused by that foul-mouthed rogue; what you gentlemen say, it matters not much, but such a dirty fellow does one more disgrace.

Dor. Give her ten shillings—and be sure you tell the young gentlewoman I must be acquainted with her.

Or.-Wom. Now do you long to be tempting this pretty creature? Well, heavens mend you!

Med. Farewell, bog!

[*Exeunt* ORANGE-WOMAN *and* HANDY.

Dorimant, when did you see your *pis-aller*, as you call her—Mrs. Loveit?

Dor. Not these two days.

Med. And how stand affairs between you?

Dor. There has been great patching of late, much ado; we make a shift to hang together.

Med. I wonder how her mighty spirit bears it.

Dor. Ill enough, on all conscience; I never knew so violent a creature.

Med. She's the most passionate in her love and the most extravagant in her jealousy of any woman I ever heard of. What note is that?

Dor. An excuse I am going to send her for the neglect I am guilty of.

Med. Prithee, read it.

Dor. No; but if you will take the pains, you may.

Med. [*reads*]. I never was a lover of business, but now I have a just reason to hate it, since it has kept me these two days from seeing you. I intend to wait upon you in the afternoon, and in the pleasure of your conversation forget all I have suffered during this tedious absence.

This business of yours, Dorimant, has been with a vizard at the playhouse; I have had an eye on you. If some malicious body should betray you, this kind note would hardly make your peace with her.

Dor. I desire no better.

Med. Why, would her knowledge of it oblige you?

Dor. Most infinitely; next to the coming to a good understanding with a new mistress, I love a quarrel with an old one. But the devil's in't! There has been such a calm in my affairs of late, I have not had the pleasure of making a woman so much as break her fan, to be sullen, or forswear herself, these three days.

Med. A very great misfortune. Let me see; I love mischief well enough to forward this business myself. I'll about it presently, and though I know the truth of what you've done will set her a-raving, I'll heighten it a little with invention, leave her in a fit o' the mother, and be here again before y'are ready.

Dor. Pray stay; you may spare yourself the labor. The business is undertaken already by one who will manage it with as much address, and I think with a little more malice than you can.

Med. Who i'the devil's name can this be!

Dor. Why, the vizard—that very vizard you saw me with.

Med. Does she love mischief so well as to betray herself to spite another?

Dor. Not so neither, Medley. I will make you comprehend the mystery. This mask, for a farther confirmation of what I have been these two days swearing to her, made me yesterday at the playhouse make her a promise before her face utterly to break off with Loveit, and, because she tenders my reputation and would not have me do a barbarous thing, has contrived a way to give me a handsome occasion.

Med. Very good.

Dor. She intends about an hour before me, this afternoon, to make Loveit a visit and, having the privilege by reason of a professed friendship between them, to talk of her concerns.

Med. Is she a friend?

Dor. Oh, an intimate friend!

Med. Better and better; pray, proceed.

Dor. She means insensibly to insinuate a discourse of me and artificially to raise her jealousy to such a height that, transported with the first motions of her passion, she shall fly upon me with all the fury imaginable as soon as ever I enter. The quarrel being thus happily begun, I am to play my part, confess and justify all my roguery, swear her impertinence and ill-humor makes her intolerable, tax her with the next fop that comes into my head, and in a huff march away, slight her and leave her to be taken by whosoever thinks it worth his time to lie down before her.

Med. This vizard is a spark and has a genius that makes her worthy of yourself, Dorimant.

Enter HANDY, *the* SHOEMAKER, *and Footman.*

Dor. You rogue there, who sneak like a dog that has flung down a dish, if you do not mend your waiting, I'll uncase you and turn you loose to the wheel of fortune.—Handy, seal this and let him run with it presently. [*Exit Footman.*

Med. Since you're resolved on a quarrel, why do you send her this kind note?

Dor. To keep her at home in order to the business. [*To the* SHOEMAKER] How now, you drunken sot?

Shoem. 'Zbud, you have no reason to talk; I have not had a bottle of sack of yours in my belly this fortnight.

Med. The orange-woman says your neighbors take notice what a heathen you are, and design to inform a bishop and have you burned for an atheist.

Shoem. Damn her, dunghill, if her husband does not remove her, she stinks so, the parish intends to indict him for a nuisance.

Med. I advise you like a friend—reform your life. You have brought the envy of the world upon you by living above yourself. Whoring and swearing are vices too genteel for a shoemaker.

Shoem. 'Zbud, I think you men of quality will grow as unreasonable as the women. You would ingross the sins of the nation; poor folks can no sooner be wicked but they're railed at by their betters.

Dor. Sirrah, I'll have you stand i'the pillory for this libel.

Shoem. Some of you deserve it, I'm sure; there are so many of 'em, that our journeymen nowadays, instead of harmless ballads, sing nothing but your damned lampoons.

Dor. Our lampoons, you rogue?

Shoem. Nay, good master, why should not you write your own commentaries as well as Cæsar?

Med. The rascal's read, I perceive.

Shoem. You know the old proverb—ale and history.

Dor. Draw on my shoes, sirrah.

Shoem. [*does so*]. Here's a shoe!

Dor. —sits with more wrinkles than there are in an angry bully's forehead!

Shoem. 'Zbud, as smooth as your mistress's skin does upon her! So; strike your foot in home. 'Zbud, if e'er a monsieur of 'em all make more fashionable ware, I'll be content to have my ears whipped off with my own paring knife.

Med. And served up in a ragout instead of coxcombs to a company of French shoemakers for a collation.

Shoem. Hold, hold! Damn 'em, caterpillars, let 'em feed upon cabbage. Come master, your health this morning! next my heart now.

Dor. Go, get you home and govern your family better! Do not let your wife follow you to the alehouse, beat your whore, and lead you home in triumph.

Shoem. 'Zbud, there's never a man i'the town lives more like a gentleman with his wife than I do. I never mind her motions, she never inquires into mine; we speak to one another civilly, hate one another heartily, and because 'tis vulgar to lie and soak together, we have each of us our several settle-bed.

Dor. Give him half a crown.

Med. Not without he will promise to be bloody drunk.

Shoem. Tope's the word i'the eye of the world, for my master's honor, Robin.

Dor. Do not debauch my servants, sirrah.

Shoem. I only tip him the wink; he knows an alehouse from a hovel. [*Exit* SHOEMAKER.

Dor. [*to* HANDY]. My clothes, quickly.

Med. Where shall we dine to-day?

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR.

Dor. Where you will; here comes a good third man.

Young Bell. Your servant, gentlemen.

Med. Gentle sir, how will you answer this visit to your honorable mistress? 'Tis not her interest you should keep company with men of sense who will be talking reason.

Young Bell. I do not fear her pardon, do you but grant me yours for my neglect of late.

Med. Though y'ave made us miserable by the want of your good company, to show you I am free from all resentment, may the beautiful cause of our misfortune give you

all the joys happy lovers have shared ever since the world began.

Young Bell. You wish me in heaven, but you believe me on my journey to hell.

Med. You have a good strong faith, and that may contribute much towards your salvation. I confess I am but of an untoward constitution, apt to have doubts and scruples, and in love they are no less distracting than in religion. Were I so near marriage, I should cry out by fits as I ride in my coach, "Cuckold, cuckold!" with no less fury than the mad fanatic does "glory!" in Bethlem.

Young Bell. Because religion makes some run mad, must I live an atheist?

Med. Is it not great indiscretion for a man of credit, who may have money enough on his word, to go and deal with Jews, who for little sums make men enter into bonds and give judgments?

Young Bell. Preach no more on this text. I am determined, and there is no hope of my conversion.

Dor. [*to* Handy, *who is fiddling about him*]. Leave your unnecessary fiddling; a wasp that's buzzing about a man's nose at dinner is not more troublesome than thou art.

Handy. You love to have your clothes hang just, sir.

Dor. I love to be well dressed, sir, and think it no scandal to my understanding.

Handy. Will you use the essence or orange-flower water?

Dor. I will smell as I do to-day, no offence to the ladies' noses.

Handy. Your pleasure, sir. [*Exit* Handy.

Dor. That a man's excellency should lie in neatly tying of a ribband or a cravat! How careful's nature in furnishing the world with necessary coxcombs!

Young Bell. That's a mighty pretty suit of yours, Dorimant.

Dor. I am glad't has your approbation.

Young Bell. No man in town has a better fancy in his clothes than you have.

Dor. You will make me have an opinion of my genius.

Med. There is a great critic, I hear, in these matters lately arrived piping hot from Paris.

Young Bell. Sir Fopling Flutter, you mean?

Med. The same.

Young Bell. He thinks himself the pattern of modern gallantry.

Dor. He is indeed the pattern of modern foppery.

Med. He was yesterday at the play, with a pair of gloves up to his elbows, and a periwig more exactly curled than a lady's head newly dressed for a ball.

Young Bell. What a pretty lisp he has!

Dor. Ho! that he affects in imitation of the people of quality of France.

Med. His head stands, for the most part, on one side, and his looks are more languishing than a lady's when she lolls at stretch in her coach or leans her head carelessly against the side of a box i'the playhouse.

Dor. He is a person indeed of great acquired follies.

Med. He is like many others, beholding to his education for making him so eminent a coxcomb. Many a fool had been lost to the world had their indulgent parents wisely bestowed neither learning nor good breeding on 'em.

Young Bell. He has been, as the sparkish word is, "brisk upon the ladies" already. He was yesterday at my Aunt Townley's and gave Mrs. Loveit a catalogue of his good qualities under the character of a complete gentleman, who, according to Sir Fopling, ought to dress well, dance well, fence well, have a genius for love letters, an agreeable voice for a chamber, be very amorous, something discreet, but not overconstant.

Med. Pretty ingredients to make an accomplished person!

Dor. I am glad he pitched upon Loveit.

Young Bell. How so?

Dor. I wanted a fop to lay to her charge, and this is as pat as may be.

Young Bell. I am confident she loves no man but you.

Dor. The good fortune were enough to make me vain, but that I am in my nature modest.

Young Bell. Hark you, Dorimant.—With your leave, Mr. Medley; 'tis only a secret concerning a fair lady.

Med. Your good breeding, sir, gives you too much trouble; you might have whispered without all this ceremony.

Young Bell. [*to* Dorimant]. How stand your affairs with Bellinda of late?

Dor. She's a little jilting baggage.

Young Bell. Nay, I believe her false enough, but she's ne'er the worse for your purpose; she was with you yesterday in a disguise at the play.

Dor. There we fell out and resolved never to speak to one another more.

Young Bell. The occasion?

Dor. Want of courage to meet me at the place appointed. These young women apprehend loving as much as the young men do fighting, at first; but once entered, like them too, they all turn bullies straight.

Enter Handy *to* Bellair.

Handy. Sir, your man without desires to speak with you.

Young Bell. Gentlemen, I'll return immediately. [*Exit* Bellair.

Med. A very pretty fellow this.

Dor. He's handsome, well bred, and by much the most tolerable of all the young men that do not abound in wit.

Med. Ever well dressed, always complaisant, and seldom impertinent. You and he are grown very intimate, I see.

Dor. It is our mutual interest to be so: it makes the women think the better of his understanding, and judge more favorably of my reputation; it makes him pass upon some for a man of very good sense, and I upon others for a very civil person.

Med. What was that whisper?

Dor. A thing which he would fain have known, but I did not think it fit to tell him; it might have frightened him from his honorable intentions of marrying.

Med. Emilia, give her her due, has the best reputation of any young woman about the town who has beauty enough to provoke detraction. Her carriage is unaffected, her discourse modest—not at all censorious nor pretending, like the counterfeits of the age.

Dor. She's a discreet maid, and I believe nothing can corrupt her but a husband.

Med. A husband?

Dor. Yes, a husband. I have known many a woman make a difficulty of losing a maidenhead, who have afterwards made none of making a cuckold.

Med. This prudent consideration I am apt to think has made you confirm poor Bellair in the desperate resolution he has taken.

Dor. Indeed, the little hope I found there was of her, in the state she was in, has made me by my advice contribute something towards the changing of her condition.

Enter Young Bellair.

Dear Bellair! By heavens, I thought we had lost thee; men in love are never to be reckoned on when we would form a company.

Young Bell. Dorimant, I am undone; my man has brought the most surprising news i'the world.

Dor. Some strange misfortune has befallen your love?

Young Bell. My father came to town last night and lodges i'the very house where Emilia lies.

Med. Does he know it is with her you are in love?

Young Bell. He knows I love, but knows not whom, without some officious sot has betrayed me.

Dor. Your Aunt Townley is your confidant and favors the business.

Young Bell. I do not apprehend any ill office from her. I have received a letter, in which I am commanded by my father to meet him at my aunt's this afternoon. He tells me farther he has made a match for me and bids me resolve to be obedient to his will or expect to be disinherited.

Med. Now's your time, Bellair. Never had lover such an opportunity of giving a generous proof of his passion.

Young Bell. As how, I pray?

Med. Why, hang an estate, marry Emilia out of hand, and provoke your father to do what he threatens. 'Tis but despising a coach, humbling yourself to a pair of goloshes, being out of countenance when you meet your friends, pointed at and pitied wherever you go by all the amorous fops that know you, and your fame will be immortal.

Young Bell. I could find in my heart to resolve not to marry at all.

Dor. Fie, fie, that would spoil a good jest and disappoint the well-natured town of an occasion of laughing at you.

Young Bell. The storm I have so long expected hangs o'er my head and begins to pour down upon me. I am on the rack and can have no rest till I'm satisfied in what I fear.—Where do you dine?

Dor. At Long's or Locket's.

Med. At Long's let it be.

Young Bell. I'll run and see Emilia and inform myself how matters stand. If my misfortunes are not so great as to make me unfit for company, I'll be with you.

[*Exit* Bellair.

Enter a Footman with a letter.

Foot. [*to* Dorimant]. Here's a letter, sir.

Dor. The superscription's right: "For Mr. Dorimant."

Med. Let's see—the very scrawl and spelling of a true-bred whore.

Dor. I know the hand; the style is admirable, I assure you.

Med. Prithee, read it.

Dor. [*reads*].

I told a you you dud not love me, if you dud, you wou'd have seen me again ere now. I have no money and am very mallicolly. Pray send me a guynie to see the operies.

Your servant to command,

Molly

Med. Pray, let the whore have a favorable answer, that she may spark it in a box and do honor to her profession.

Dor. She shall, and perk up i'the face of quality. Is the coach at the door?

Handy. You did not bid me send for it.

[Handy *offers to go out.*

Dor. Eternal blockhead! Hey, sot——

Handy. Did you call me, sir?

Dor. I hope you have no just exception to the name, sir?

Handy. I have sense, sir.

Dor. Not so much as a fly in winter. How did you come, Medley?

Med. In a chair.

Foot. You may have a hackney coach if you please, sir.

Dor. I may ride the elephant if I please, sir. Call another chair and let my coach follow to Long's. [*Exeunt, singing,*

"Be calm, ye great parents, etc."

ACT II

Scene I

In lodgings.

Enter Lady Townley *and* Emilia.

Lady Town. I was afraid, Emilia, all had been discovered.

Emil. I tremble with the apprehension still.

Lady Town. That my brother should take lodgings i'the very house where you lie!

Emil. 'Twas lucky we had timely notice to warn the people to be secret. He seems to be a mighty good-humored old man.

Lady Town. He ever had a notable smirking way with him.

Emil. He calls me rogue, tells me he can't abide me, and does so bepat me.

Lady Town. On my word, you are much in his favor then!

Emil. He has been very inquisitive, I am told, about my family, my reputation, and my fortune.

Lady Town. I am confident he does not i'the least suspect you are the woman his son's in love with.

Emil. What should make him, then, inform himself so particularly of me?

Lady Town. He was always of a very loving temper himself; it may be he has a doting fit upon him—who knows?

Emil. It cannot be!

Enter Young Bellair.

Lady Town. Here comes my nephew. Where did you leave your father?

Young Bell. Writing a note within. Emilia, this early visit looks as if some kind jealousy would not let you rest at home.

Emil. The knowledge I have of my rival gives me a little cause to fear your constancy.

Young Bell. My constancy! I vow——

Emil. Do not vow. Our love is frail as is our life and full as little in our power; and are you sure you shall outlive this day?

Young Bell. I am not; but when we are in perfect health, 'twere an idle thing to fright ourselves with the thoughts of sudden death.

Lady Town. Pray, what has passed between you and your father i'the garden?

Young Bell. He's firm in his resolution, tells me I must marry Mrs. Harriet, or swears he'll marry himself and disinherit me. When I saw I could not prevail with him to be more indulgent, I dissembled an obedience to his will, which has composed his passion and will give us time, and I hope, opportunity, to deceive him.

Enter Old Bellair *with a note in his hand.*

Lady Town. Peace, here he comes!

Old Bell. Harry, take this and let your man carry it for me to Mr. Forbes's chamber—my lawyer i'the Temple.

[*Exit* Young Bellair.

[*To* Emilia] Neighbor, a dod, I am glad to see thee here. Make much of her, sister; she's one of the best of your acquaintance; I like her countenance and her behavior well; she has a modesty that is not common i'this age—a dod, she has!

Lady Town. I know her value, brother, and esteem her accordingly.

Old Bell. Advise her to wear a little more mirth in her face; a dod, she's too serious.

Lady Town. The fault is very excusable in a young woman.

Old Bell. Nay, a dod, I like her ne'er the worse; a melancholy beauty has her charms. I love a pretty sadness in a face, which varies now and then, like changeable colors, into a smile.

Lady Town. Methinks you speak very feelingly, brother.

Old Bell. I am but five and fifty, sister, you know, an age not altogether unsensible. [*To* Emilia] Cheer up, sweetheart! I have a secret to tell thee may chance to make thee merry. We three will make collation together anon; i'the meantime, mum, I can't abide you! Go, I can't abide you.

Enter Young Bellair.

Harry, come! You must along with me to my Lady Woodvil's. I am going to slip the boy at a mistress.

Young Bell. At a wife, sir, you would say.

Old Bell. You need not look so glum, sir; a wife is no curse when she brings the blessing of a good estate with her. But an idle town flirt, with a painted face, a rotten reputation, and a crazy fortune, a dod, is the devil and all, and such a one I hear you are in league with.

Young Bell. I cannot help detraction, sir.

Old Bell. Out! 'A pize o' their breeches, there are keeping-fools enough for such flaunting baggages, and they are e'en too good for 'em. [*To* Emilia] Remember night.—Go, you're a rogue, you're a rogue! Fare you well, fare you well! Come, come, come along, sir! [*Exeunt* Old *and* Young Bellair.

Lady Town. On my word, the old man comes on apace. I'll lay my life he's smitten.

Emil. This is nothing but the pleasantness of his humor.

Lady Town. I know him better than you. Let it work; it may prove lucky.

Enter a Page.

Page. Madam, Mr. Medley has sent to know whether a visit will not be troublesome this afternoon.

Lady Town. Send him word his visits never are so. [*Exit Page.*

Emil. He's a very pleasant man.

Lady Town. He's a very necessary man among us women; he's not scandalous i'the least, perpetually contriving to bring good company together, and always ready to stop up a gap at ombre. Then, he knows all the little news o'the town.

Emil. I love to hear him talk o'the intrigues. Let 'em be never so dull in themselves, he'll make 'em pleasant i'the relation.

Lady Town. But he improves things so much one can take no measure of the truth from him. Mr. Dorimant swears a flea or a maggot is not made more monstrous by a magnifying glass than a story is by his telling it.

Emil. Hold, here he comes.

Enter Medley.

Lady Town. Mr. Medley.

Med. Your servant, madam.

Lady Town. You have made yourself a stranger of late.

Emil. I believe you took a surfeit of ombre last time you were here.

Med. Indeed, I had my belly full of that termagant, Lady Dealer. There never was so insatiable a carder; an old gleeker never loved to sit to't like her. I have played with her now at least a dozen times till she's worn out all her fine complexion and her tower would keep in curl no longer.

Lady Town. Blame her not, poor woman, she loves nothing so well as a black ace.

Med. The pleasure I have seen her in when she has had hope in drawing for a matadore.

Emil. 'Tis as pretty sport to her as persuading masks off is to you, to make discoveries.

Lady Town. Pray, where's your friend Mr. Dorimant?

Med. Soliciting his affairs; he's a man of great employment—has more mistresses now depending than the most eminent lawyer in England has causes.

Emil. Here has been Mrs. Loveit so uneasy and out of humor these two days.

Lady Town. How strangely love and jealousy rage in that poor woman!

Med. She could not have picked out a devil upon earth so proper to torment her; h'as made her break a dozen or two fans already, tear half a score points in pieces, and destroy hoods and knots without number.

Lady Town. We heard of a pleasant serenade he gave her t'other night.

Med. A Danish serenade with kettledrums and trumpets.

Emil. Oh, barbarous!

Med. What! You are of the number of the ladies whose ears are grown so delicate since our operas you can be charmed with nothing but *flute doux* and French hautboys.

Emil. Leave your raillery, and tell us is there any new wit come forth—songs or novels?

Med. A very pretty piece of gallantry, by an eminent author, called *The Diversions of Brussels,* very necessary to be read by all old ladies who are desirous to improve themselves at questions and commands, blindman's buff, and the like fashionable recreations.

Emil. Oh, ridiculous!

Med. Then there is *The Art of Affectation,* written by a late beauty of quality, teaching you how to draw up your breasts, stretch out your neck, to thrust out your breech, to play with your head, to toss up your nose, to bite your lips, to turn up your eyes, to speak in a silly, soft tone of a voice, and use all the foolish French words that will infallibly make your person and conversation charming, with a short apology at the latter end in the behalf of young ladies who notoriously wash and paint though they have naturally good complexions.

Emil. What a deal of stuff you tell us!

Med. Such as the town affords, madam. The Russians, hearing the great respect we have for foreign dancing, have lately sent over some of their best balladines, who are now practising a famous ballet which will be suddenly danced at the Bear Garden.

Lady Town. Pray forbear your idle stories, and give us an account of the state of love as it now stands.

Med. Truly, there have been some revolutions in those affairs, great chopping and changing among the old, and some new lovers whom malice, indiscretion, and misfortune have luckily brought into play.

Lady Town. What think you of walking into the next room and sitting down before you engage in this business?

Med. I wait upon you, and I hope (though women are commonly unreasonable) by the plenty of scandal I shall discover, to give you very good content, ladies. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

The lodging of Mistress Loveit.

Enter Mrs. Loveit *and* Pert, Mrs. Loveit *putting up a letter, then pulling out a pocket-glass and looking in it.*

Mrs. Lov. Pert.

Pert. Madam?

Mrs. Lov. I hate myself, I look so ill to-day.

Pert. Hate the wicked cause on't, that base man Mr. Dorimant, who makes you torment and vex yourself continually.

Mrs. Lov. He is to blame, indeed.

Pert. To blame to be two days without sending, writing, or coming near you, contrary to his oath and covenant! 'Twas to much purpose to make him swear! I'll lay my life there's not an article but he has broken—talked to the vizards i'the pit; waited upon the ladies from the boxes to their coaches; gone behind the scenes; and fawned upon those little insignificant creatures, the players. 'Tis impossible for a man of his inconstant temper to forbear, I'm sure.

Mrs. Lov. I know he is a devil, but he has something of the angel yet undefaced in him, which makes him so charming and agreeable that I must love him, be he never so wicked.

Pert. I little thought, madam, to see your spirit tamed to this degree, who banished poor Mr. Lackwit but for taking up another lady's fan in your presence.

Mrs. Lov. My knowing of such odious fools contributes to the making of me love Dorimant the better.

Pert. Your knowing of Mr. Dorimant, in my mind, should rather make you hate all mankind.

Mrs. Lov. So it does, besides himself.

Pert. Pray, what excuse does he make in his letter?

Mrs. Lov. He has had business.

Pert. Business in general terms would not have been a current excuse for another. A modish man is always very busy when he is in pursuit of a new mistress.

Mrs. Lov. Some fop has bribed you to rail at him. He had business, I will believe it, and will forgive him.

Pert. You may forgive him anything, but I shall never forgive him his turning me into ridicule, as I hear he does.

Mrs. Lov. I perceive you are of the number of those fools his wit had made his enemies.

Pert. I am of the number of those he's pleased to rally, madam; and if we may believe Mr. Wagfan and Mr. Caperwell, he sometimes makes merry with yourself, too, among his laughing companions.

Mrs. Lov. Blockheads are as malicious to witty men as ugly women are to the handsome; 'tis their interest, and they make it their business to defame 'em.

Pert. I wish Mr. Dorimant would not make it his business to defame you.

Mrs. Lov. Should he, I had rather be made infamous by him than owe my reputation to the dull discretion of those fops you talk of.

Enter Bellinda.

—Bellinda! [*Running to her*].

Bel. My dear!

Mrs. Lov. You have been unkind of late.

Bel. Do not say unkind, say unhappy.

Mrs. Lov. I could chide you. Where have you been these two days?

Bel. Pity me rather, my dear, where I have been so tired with two or three country gentlewomen, whose conversation has been more insufferable than a country fiddle.

Mrs. Lov. Are they relations?

Bel. No; Welsh acquaintance I made when I was last year at St. Winifred's. They have asked me a thousand questions of the modes and intrigues of the town, and I have told 'em almost as many things for news that hardly were so when their gowns were in fashion.

Mrs. Lov. Provoking creatures! How could you endure 'em?

Bel. [*aside*]. Now to carry on my plot. Nothing but love could make me capable of so much falsehood. 'Tis time to begin, lest Dorimant should come before her jealousy has stung her. [*Laughs, and then speaks on*] I was yesterday at a play with 'em, where I was fain to show 'em the living, as the man at Westminster does the dead: "That is Mrs Such-a-one, admired for her beauty; that is Mr. Such-a-one, cried up for a wit; that is sparkish Mr. Such-a-one, who keeps reverend Mrs. Such-a-one; and there sits fine Mrs. Such-a-one who was lately cast off by my Lord Such-a-one."

Mrs. Lov. Did you see Dorimant there?

Bel. I did, and imagine you were with him and have no mind to own it.

Mrs. Lov. What should make you think so?

Bel. A lady masked in a pretty dishabille, whom Dorimant entertained with more respect than the gallants do a common vizard.

Mrs. Lov. [*aside*]. Dorimant at the play entertaining a mask! Oh, heavens!

Bel. [*aside*]. Good!

Mrs. Lov. Did he stay all the while?

Bel. Till the play was done and then led her out, which confirms me it was you.

Mrs. Lov. Traitor!

Pert. Now you may believe he has business, and you may forgive him, too.

Mrs. Lov. Ingrateful, perjured man!

Bel. You seem so much concerned, my dear, I fear I have told you unawares what I had better have concealed for your quiet.

Mrs. Lov. What manner of shape had she?

Bel. Tall and slender. Her motions were very genteel; certainly she must be some person of condition.

Mrs. Lov. Shame and confusion be ever in her face when she shows it!

Bel. I should blame your discretion for loving that wild man, my dear, but they say he has a way so bewitching that few can defend their hearts who know him.

Mrs. Lov. I will tear him out from mine or die i'the attempt.

Bel. Be more moderate.

Mrs. Lov. Would I had daggers, darts, or poisoned arrows in my breast, so I could but remove the thoughts of him from thence!

Bel. Fie, fie! your transports are too violent, my dear; this may be but an accidental gallantry, and 'tis likely ended at her coach.

Pert. Should it proceed farther, let your comfort be, the conduct Mr. Dorimant affects will quickly make you know your rival, ten to one let you see her ruined, her reputation exposed to the town—a happiness none will envy her but yourself, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Whoe'er she be, all the harm I wish her is, may she love him as well as I do and may he give her as much cause to hate him.

Pert. Never doubt the latter end of your curse, madam.

Mrs. Lov. May all the passions that are raised by neglected love—jealousy, indignation, spite, and thirst of revenge—eternally rage in her soul as they do now in mine. [*Walks up and down with a distracted air*]

Enter a Page.

Page. Madam, Master Dorimant——

Mrs. Lov. I will not see him.

Page. I told him you were within, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Say you lied—say I'm busy; shut the door—say anything!

Page. He's here, madam.

Enter Dorimant.

Dor. They taste of death who do at heaven arrive;
But we this paradise approach alive.

[*To* Mrs. Loveit] What, dancing the galloping nag without a fiddle? [*Offers to catch her by the hand. She flings away and walks on*] I fear this restlessness of the body, madam [*pursuing her*], proceeds from an unquietness of the mind. What unlucky accident puts you out of humor? A point ill washed, knots spoiled i'the making up, hair shaded awry, or some other little mistake in setting you in order?

Pert. A trifle, in my opinion, sir, more inconsiderable than any you mention.

Dor. O Mrs. Pert! I never knew you sullen enough to be silent; come, let me know the business.

Pert. The business, sir, is the business that has taken you up these two days. How have I seen you laugh at men of business, and now to become a man of business yourself!

Dor. We are not masters of our own affections; our inclinations daily alter. Now we love pleasure, and anon we shall dote on business. Human frailty will have it so, and who can help it?

Mrs. Lov. Faithless, inhuman, barbarous man——

Dor. Good! Now the alarm strikes.——

Mrs. Lov. —without sense of love, of honor, or of gratitude, tell me, for I will know, what devil masked she was you were with at the play yesterday?

Dor. Faith, I resolved as much as you, but the devil was obstinate and would not tell me.

Mrs. Lov. False in this as in your vows to me! You do know.

Dor. The truth is, I did all I could to know.

Mrs. Lov. And dare you own it to my face? Hell and furies!

[*Tears her fan in pieces.*

Dor. Spare your fan, madam; you are growing hot and will want it to cool you.

Mrs. Lov. Horror and distraction seize you! Sorrow and remorse gnaw your soul, and punish all your perjuries to me——

[*Weeps.*

Dor. So thunder breaks the cloud in twain
And makes a passage for the rain.

[*Turning to* Bellinda] Bellinda, you are the devil that has raised this storm; you were at the play yesterday and have been making discoveries to your dear.

Bel. You're the most mistaken man i' the world.

Dor. It must be so, and here I vow revenge; resolve to pursue and persecute you more impertinently than ever any loving fop did his mistress, hunt you i'the park, trace you i'the Mall, dog you in every visit you make, haunt you at the plays and i'the drawing-room, hang my nose in your neck and talk to you whether you will or no, and ever look upon you with such dying eyes till your friends grow jealous of me, send you out of town, and the world suspect your reputation. [*In a lower voice*]—At my Lady Townley's when we go from hence.

[*He looks kindly on* Bellinda.

Bel. I'll meet you there.

Dor. Enough.

Mrs. Lov. Stand off! [*Pushing* DORIMANT *away*] You shall not stare upon her so.

Dor. Good; there's one made jealous already.

Mrs. Lov. Is this the constancy you vowed?

Dor. Constancy at my years? 'Tis not a virtue in season; you might as well expect the fruit the autumn ripens i'the spring.

Mrs. Lov. Monstrous principle!

Dor. Youth has a long journey to go, madam; should I have set up my rest at the first inn I lodged at, I should never have arrived at the happiness I now enjoy.

Mrs. Lov. Dissembler, damned dissembler!

Dor. I am so, I confess. Good nature and good manners corrupt me. I am honest in my inclinations, and would not, were't not to avoid offence, make a lady in years believe I think her young—wilfully mistake art for nature—and seem as fond of a thing I am weary of as when I doted on't in earnest.

Mrs. Lov. False man!

Dor. True woman!

Mrs. Lov. Now you begin to show yourself.

Dor. Love gilds us over and makes us show fine things to one another for a time, but soon the gold wears off and then again the native brass appears.

Mrs. Lov. Think on your oaths, your vows, and protestations, perjured man!

Dor. I made 'em when I was in love.

Mrs. Lov. And therefore ought they not to bind? Oh, impious!

Dor. What we swear at such a time may be a certain proof of a present passion; but, to say truth, in love there is no security to be given for the future.

Mrs. Lov. Horrid and ingrateful! Begone, and never see me more!

Dor. I am not one of those troublesome coxcombs who, because they were once well received, take the privilege to plague a woman with their love ever after. I shall obey you, madam, though I do myself some violence.

[*He offers to go and* MRS. LOVEIT *pulls him back.*

Mrs. Lov. Come back! You shall not go! Could you have the ill-nature to offer it?

Dor. When love grows diseased, the best thing we can do is to put it to a violent death. I cannot endure the torture of a ling'ring and consumptive passion.

Mrs. Lov. Can you think mine sickly?

Dor. Oh, it is desperately ill. What worse symptoms are there than your being always uneasy when I visit you, your picking quarrels with me on slight occasions, and in my absence kindly listening to the impertinences of every fashionable fool that talks to you?

Mrs. Lov. What fashionable fool can you lay to my charge?

Dor. Why, the very cock-fool of all those fools, Sir Fopling Flutter.

Mrs. Lov. I never saw him in my life but once.

Dor. The worse woman you, at first sight to put on all your charms, to entertain him with that softness in your voice, and all that wanton kindness in your eyes you so notoriously affect when you design a conquest.

Mrs. Lov. So damned a lie did never malice yet invent. Who told you this?

Dor. No matter. That ever I should love a woman that can dote on a senseless caper, a tawdry French ribband, and a formal cravat!

Mrs. Lov. You make me mad.

Dor. A guilty conscience may do much. Go on, be the game-mistress o' the town, and enter all our young fops as fast as they come from travel.

Mrs. Lov. Base and scurrilous!

Dor. A fine mortifying reputation 'twill be for a woman of your pride, wit, and quality!

Mrs. Lov. This jealousy's a mere pretence, a cursed trick of your own devising.—I know you.

Dor. Believe it and all the ill of me you can, I would not have a woman have the least good thought of me, that can think well of Fopling. Farewell! Fall to, and much good may you do with your coxcomb.

Mrs. Lov. Stay! Oh stay! and I will tell you all!

Dor. I have been told too much already. [*Exit* DORIMANT.

Mrs. Lov. Call him again!

Pert. E'en let him go, a fair riddance.

Mrs. Lov. Run, I say! Call him again! I will have him called!

Pert. The devil should call him away first, were it my concern. [*Exit* PERT.

Bel. He's frighted me from the very thoughts of loving men. For heaven's sake, my dear, do not discover what I told you! I dread his tongue as much as you ought to have done his friendship.

Enter PERT.

Pert. He's gone, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Lightning blast him!

Pert. When I told him you desired him to come back, he smiled, made a mouth at me, flung into his coach, and said——

Mrs. Lov. What did he say?

Pert. "Drive away!" and then repeated verses.

Mrs. Lov. Would I had made a contract to be a witch when first I entertained this greater devil—monster—barbarian! I could tear myself in pieces. Revenge—nothing but

revenge can ease me! Plague, War, Famine, Fire—all that can bring universal ruin and misery on mankind, with joy I'd perish to have you in my power but this moment!

[*Exit* MRS. LOVEIT.

Pert. Follow, madam; leave her not in this outrageous passion!

[PERT *gathers up the things.*

Bel. He's given me the proof which I desired of his love, but 'tis a proof of his ill-nature too. I wish I had not seen him use her so.

I sigh to think that Dorimant may be
One day as faithless and unkind to me.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I

LADY WOODVIL'S *lodgings.*

Enter HARRIET *and* BUSY, *her woman.*

Busy. Dear madam, let me see that curl in order.

Har. Let me alone; I will shake 'em all out of order.

Busy. Will you never leave this wildness?

Har. Torment me not.

Busy. Look! there's a knot falling off.

Har. Let it drop.

Busy. But one pin, dear madam.

Har. How do I daily suffer under thy officious fingers!

Busy. Ah, the difference that is between you and my Lady Dapper! How uneasy she is if the least thing be amiss about her!

Har. She is indeed most exact; nothing is ever wanting to make her ugliness remarkable.

Busy. Jeering people say so.

Har. Her powdering, painting, and her patching never fail in public to draw the tongues and eyes of all the men upon her.

Busy. She is, indeed, a little too pretending.

Har. That women should set up for beauty as much in spite of nature as some men have done for wit!

Busy. I hope without offence one may endeavor to make one's self agreeable.

Har. Not when 'tis impossible. Women then ought to be no more fond of dressing than fools should be of talking; hoods and modesty, masks and silence—things that shadow and conceal—they should think of nothing else.

Busy. Jesu! Madam, what will your mother think is become of you? For heaven's sake go in again!

Har. I won't.

Busy. This is the extravagant'st thing that ever you did in your life, to leave her and a gentleman who is to be your husband.

Har. My husband! Hast thou so little wit to think I spoke what I meant when I overjoyed her in the country with a low curtsey and "What you please, madam; I shall ever be obedient"?

Busy. Nay, I know not, you have so many fetches.

Har. And this was one to get her up to London; nothing else, I assure thee.

Busy. Well, the man, in my mind, is a fine man.

Har. The man indeed wears his clothes fashionably and has a pretty, negligent way with him, very courtly and much affected; he bows, and talks, and smiles so agreeably, as he thinks.

Busy. I never saw anything so genteel.

Har. Varnished over with good breeding, many a blockhead makes a tolerable show.

Busy. I wonder you do not like him.

Har. I think I might be brought to endure him, and that is all a reasonable woman should expect in a husband; but there is duty i'the case, and like the haughty Merab I

Find much aversion in my stubborn mind,

which

Is bred by being promised and designed.

Busy. I wish you do not design your own ruin! I partly guess your inclinations, madam—that Mr. Dorimant——

Har. Leave your prating, and sing some foolish song or other.

Busy. I will; the song you love so well ever since you saw Mr. Dorimant:

Song

When first Amintas charmed my heart,
My heedless sheep began to stray;
The wolves soon stole the greatest part,
And all will now be made a prey.

Ah, let not love your thoughts possess,
'Tis fatal to a shepherdess;
The dang'rous passion you must shun,
Or else like me be quite undone.

Har. Shall I be paid down by a covetous parent for a purchase? I need no land; no, I'll lay myself out all in love. It is decreed——

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR.

Young Bell. What generous resolution are you in making, madam?

Har. Only to be disobedient, sir.

Young Bell. Let me join hands with you in that——

Har. With all my heart. I never thought I should have given you mine so willingly. Here I, Harriet——

Young Bell. And I, Harry——
Har. Do solemnly protest——
Young Bell. And vow——
Har. That I with you——
Young Bell. And I with you——
Both. Will never marry.
Har. A match!
Young Bell. And no match! How do you like this indifference now?
Har. You expect I should take it ill, I see.
Young Bell. 'Tis not unnatural for you women to be a little angry, you miss a conquest; though you would slight the poor man were he in your power.
Har. There are some, it may be, have an eye like Bart'lomew, big enough for the whole fair; but I am not of the number, and you may keep your gingerbread. 'Twill be more acceptable to the lady whose dear image it wears, sir.
Young Bell. But I confess, madam, you came a day after the fair.
Har. You own, then, you are in love?
Young Bell. I do.
Har. The confidence is generous, and in return I could almost find in my heart to let you know my inclinations.
Young Bell. Are you in love?
Har. Yes, with this dear town, to that degree I can scarce endure the country in landscapes and hangings.
Young Bell. What a dreadful thing 'twould be to be hurried back to Hampshire!
Har. Ah, name it not!
Young Bell. As for us, I find we shall agree well enough. Would we could do something to deceive the grave people!
Har. Could we delay their quick proceeding, 'twere well. A reprieve is a good step towards the getting of a pardon.
Young Bell. If we give over the game, we are undone. What think you of playing it on booty?
Har. What do you mean?
Young Bell. Pretend to be in love with one another; 'twill make some dilatory excuses we may feign, pass the better.
Har. Let us do't, if it be but for the dear pleasure of dissembling.
Young Bell. Can you play your part?
Har. I know not what it is to love, but I have made pretty remarks by being now and then where lovers meet. Where did you leave their gravities?
Young Bell. I'th' next room! Your mother was censuring our modern gallant.

Enter Old Bellair *and* Lady Woodvil.

Har. Peace! Here they come; I will lean against this wall and look bashfully down upon my fan, while you, like an amorous spark, modishly entertain me.
Lady Wood. [*to* Old Bellair]. Never go about to excuse 'em; come, come, it was not so when I was a young woman.
Old Bell. Adod, they're something disrespectful——
Lady Wood. Quality was then considered and not rallied by every fleering fellow.
Old Bell. Youth will have its jest, adod, it will.
Lady Wood. 'Tis good breeding now to be civil to none but players and Exchange women; they are treated by 'em as much above their condition as others are below theirs.
Old Bell. Out! A pize on 'em! talk no more; the rogues ha' got an ill habit of preferring beauty no matter where they find it.
Lady Wood. See your son and my daughter; they have improved their acquaintance since they were within.
Old Bell. Adod, methinks they have! Let's keep back and observe.
Young Bell. [*to* Harriet]. Now for a look and gestures that may persuade 'em I am saying all the passionate things imaginable——
Har. Your head a little more on one side. Ease yourself on your left leg and play with your right hand.
Young Bell. Thus, is it not?
Har. Now set your right leg firm on the ground, adjust your belt, then look about you.
Young Bell. A little exercising will make me perfect.
Har. Smile, and turn to me again very sparkish.
Young Bell. Will you take your turn and be instructed?
Har. With all my heart!
Young Bell. At one motion play your fan, roll your eyes, and then settle a kind look upon me.
Har. So.
Young Bell. Now spread your fan, look down upon it, and tell the sticks with a finger!
Har. Very modish!
Young Bell. Clap your hand up to your bosom, hold down your gown, shrug a little, draw up your breasts, and let 'em fall again gently, with a sigh or two, etc.
Har. By the instructions you give, I suspect you for one of those malicious observers who watch people's eyes, and from innocent looks make scandalous conclusions.
Young Bell. I know some, indeed, who out of mere love to mischief are as vigilant as jealousy itself, and will give you an account of every glance that passes at a play and i'th' Circle.
Har. 'Twill not be amiss now to seem a little pleasant.
Young Bell. Clap your fan, then, in both your hands, snatch it to your mouth, smile,

and with a lively motion fling your body a little forwards. So—now spread it; fall back on the sudden, cover your face with it and break out into loud laughter—take up! look grave and fall a-fanning of yourself—admirably well acted!

Har. I think I am pretty apt at these matters.

Old Bell. [*to* LADY WOODVIL]. Adod, I like this well!

Lady Wood. This promises something.

Old Bell. Come! there is love i'th' case—adod there is, or will be. [*To* HARRIET] What say you, young lady?

Young Bell. All in good time, sir; you expect we should fall to and love as gamecocks fight, as soon as we are set together? Adod, y'are unreasonable!

Old Bell. Adod, sirrah, I like thy wit well.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. The coach is at the door, madam.

Old Bell. Go, get you and take the air together.

Lady Wood. Will not you go with us?

Old Bell. Out, a pize! Adod, I ha' business and cannot. We shall meet at night at my sister Townley's.

Young Bell. [*aside*]. He's going to Emilia. I overheard him talk of a collation. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

LADY TOWNLEY'S *drawing-room.*

Enter LADY TOWNLEY, EMILIA, *and* MR. MEDLEY.

Lady Town. I pity the young lovers we last talked of, though to say truth their conduct has been so indiscreet they deserve to be unfortunate.

Med. Y'have had an exact account, from the great lady i'th' box down to the little orange wench.

Emil. You're a living libel, a breathing lampoon. I wonder you are not torn in pieces.

Med. What think you of setting up an office of intelligence for these matters? The project may get money.

Lady Town. You would have great dealings with country ladies.

Med. More than Muddiman has with their husbands.

Enter BELLINDA.

Lady Town. Bellinda, what has been become of you? We have not seen you here of late with your friend Mrs. Loveit.

Bel. Dear creature, I have left her but now so sadly afflicted.

Lady Town. With her old distemper, jealousy?

Med. Dorimant has played her some new prank.

Bel. Well, that Dorimant is certainly the worst man breathing.

Emil. I once thought so.

Bel. And do you not think so still?

Emil. No, indeed!

Bel. Oh, Jesu!

Emil. The town does him a great injury, and I will never believe what it says of a man I do not know again, for his sake.

Bel. You make me wonder.

Lady Town. He's a very well-bred man.

Bel. But strangely ill-natured.

Emil. Then, he's a very witty man.

Bel. But a man of no principles.

Med. Your man of principles is a very fine thing, indeed.

Bel. To be preferred to men of parts by women who have regard to their reputation and quiet. Well, were I minded to play the fool, he should be the last man I'd think of.

Med. He has been the first in many ladies' favors, though you are so severe, madam.

Lady Town. What he may be for a lover, I know not; but he's a very pleasant acquaintance, I am sure.

Bel. Had you seen him use Mrs. Loveit as I have done, you would never endure him more.

Emil. What, has he quarreled with her again?

Bel. Upon the slightest occasion; he's jealous of Sir Fopling.

Lady Town. She never saw him in her life but yesterday, and that was here.

Emil. On my conscience, he's the only man in town that's her aversion. How horribly out of humor she was all the time he talked to her!

Bel. And somebody has wickedly told him——

Emil. Here he comes.

Enter DORIMANT.

Med. Dorimant! you are luckily come to justify yourself.—Here's a lady——

Bel. Has a word or two to say to you from a disconsolate person.

Dor. You tender your reputation too much, I know, madam, to whisper with me before this good company.

Bel. To serve Mrs. Loveit I'll make a bold venture.

Dor. Here's Medley, the very spirit of scandal.

Bel. No matter!

Emil. 'Tis something you are unwilling to hear, Mr. Dorimant.

Lady Town. Tell him, Bellinda, whether he will or no.

Bel. [*aloud*]. Mrs. Loveit——

Dor. Softly! these are laughers; you do not know 'em.

Bel. [*to* DORIMANT *apart*]. In a word, y'ave made me hate you, which I thought you never could have done.

Dor. In obeying your commands.

Bel. 'Twas a cruel part you played. How could you act it?

Dor. Nothing is cruel to a man who could kill himself to please you. Remember five o'clock to-morrow morning!

Bel. I tremble when you name it.

Dor. Be sure you come!

Bel. I shall not.

Dor. Swear you will!

Bel. I dare not.

Dor. Swear, I say!

Bel. By my life—by all the happiness I hope for——

Dor. You will.

Bel. I will!

Dor. Kind!

Bel. I am glad I've sworn. I vow, I think I should ha' failed you else!

Dor. Surprisingly kind! In what temper did you leave Loveit?

Bel. Her raving was prettily over, and she began to be in a brave way of defying you and all your works. Where have you been since you went from thence?

Dor. I looked in at the play.

Bel. I have promised, and must return to her again.

Dor. Persuade her to walk in the Mall this evening.

Bel. She hates the place and will not come.

Dor. Do all you can to prevail with her.

Bel. For what purpose?

Dor. Sir Fopling will be here anon; I'll prepare him to set upon her there before me.

Bel. You persecute her too much, but I'll do all you'll ha' me.

Dor. Tell her plainly 'tis grown too dull a business; I can drudge no longer.

Emil. There are afflictions in love, Mr. Dorimant.

Dor. You women make 'em, who are commonly as unreasonable in that as you are at play. Without the advantage be on your side, a man can never quietly give over when he's weary.

Med. If you would play without being obliged to complaisance, Dorimant, you should play in public places.

Dor. Ordinaries were a very good thing for that, but gentlemen do not of late frequent 'em. The deep play is now in private houses. [BELLINDA *offering to steal away.*

Lady Town. Bellinda, are you leaving us so soon?

Bel. I am going to the Park with Mrs. Loveit, madam. [*Exit* BELLINDA.

Lady Town. This confidence will go nigh to spoil this young creature.

Med. 'Twill do her good, madam. Young men who are bred up under practising lawyers prove the abler counsel when they come to be called to the bar themselves.

Dor. The town has been very favorable to you this afternoon, my Lady Townley; you used to have an *embarras* of chairs and coaches at your door, an uproar of footmen in your hall, and a noise of fools above here.

Lady Town. Indeed, my house is the general rendezvous, and next to the playhouse is the common refuge of all the young, idle people.

Emil. Company is a very good thing, madam, but I wonder you do not love it a little more chosen.

Lady Town. 'Tis good to have an universal taste; we should love wit, but for variety be able to divert ourselves with the extravagancies of those who want it.

Med. Fools will make you laugh.

Emil. For once or twice, but the repetition of their folly after a visit or two grows tedious and unsufferable.

Lady Town. You are a little too delicate, Emilia.

Enter a Page.

Page. Sir Fopling Flutter, madam, desires to know if you are to be seen.

Lady Town. Here's the freshest fool in town, and one who has not cloyed you yet. Page!

Page. Madam?

Lady Town. Desire him to walk up.

Dor. Do not you fall on him, Medley, and snub him. Soothe him up in his extravagance; he will show the better.

Med. You know I have a natural indulgence for fools and need not this caution, sir.

Enter SIR FOPLING FLUTTER *with his Page after him.*

Sir Fop. Page, wait without. [*To* LADY TOWNLEY] Madam, I kiss your hands. I see yesterday was nothing of chance; the *belles assemblées* form themselves here every day. [*To* EMILIA] Lady, your servant. Dorimant, let me embrace thee! Without lying, I have not met with any of my acquaintance who retain so much of Paris as thou dost—the very air thou hadst when the marquise mistook thee i'th' Tuileries and cried, "Hey, Chevalier!" and then begged thy pardon.

Dor. I would fain wear in fashion as long as I can, sir; 'tis a thing to be valued in men as well as baubles.

Sir Fop. Thou art a man of wit and understandest the town. Prithee, let thee and I be intimate; there is no living without

making some good man the confidant of our pleasures.

Dor. 'Tis true! but there is no man so improper for such a business as I am.

Sir Fop. Prithee, why hast thou so modest an opinion of thyself?

Dor. Why, first, I could never keep a secret in my life; and then, there is no charm so infallibly makes me fall in love with a woman as my knowing a friend loves her. I deal honestly with you.

Sir Fop. Thy humor's very gallant, or let me perish! I knew a French count so like thee!

Lady Town. Wit, I perceive, has more power over you than beauty, Sir Fopling, else you would not have let this lady stand so long neglected.

Sir Fop. [*to* Emilia]. A thousand pardons, madam; some civilities due of course upon the meeting a long absent friend. The *éclat* of so much beauty, I confess, ought to have charmed me sooner.

Emil. The *brilliant* of so much good language, sir, has much more power than the little beauty I can boast.

Sir Fop. I never saw anything prettier than this high work on your *point d'Espagne.*

Emil. 'Tis not so rich as *point de Venise.*

Sir Fop. Not altogether, but looks cooler and is more proper for the season.—Dorimant, is not that Medley?

Dor. The same, sir.

Sir Fop. Forgive me, sir; in this *embarras* of civilities I could not come to have you in my arms sooner. You understand an equipage the best of any man in town, I hear.

Med. By my own you would not guess it.

Sir Fop. There are critics who do not write, sir.

Med. Our peevish poets will scarce allow it.

Sir Fop. Damn 'em, they'll allow no man wit who does not play the fool like themselves and show it! Have you taken notice of the *calèche* I brought over?

Med. Oh, yes! It has quite another air than the English makes.

Sir Fop. 'Tis as easily known from an English tumbril as an Inns-of-Court man is from one of us.

Dor. True; there is a *bel air* in *calèches* as well as men.

Med. But there are few so delicate to observe it.

Sir Fop. The world is generally very *grossier* here, indeed.

Lady Town. He's very fine.

Emil. Extreme proper.

Sir Fop. A slight suit I made to appear in at my first arrival, not worthy your consideration, ladies.

Dor. The pantaloon is very well mounted.

Sir Fop. The tassels are new and pretty.

Med. I never saw a coat better cut.

Sir Fop. It makes me show long-waisted, and, I think, slender.

Dor. That's the shape our ladies dote on.

Med. Your breech, though, is a handful too high, in my eye, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. Peace, Medley, I have wished it lower a thousand times, but a pox on't! 'twill not be.

Lady Town. His gloves are well fringed, large, and graceful.

Sir Fop. I was always eminent for being *bien ganté.*

Emil. He wears nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris.

Sir Fop. You are in the right, madam.

Lady Town. The suit?

Sir Fop. Barroy.

Emil. The garniture?

Sir Fop. Le Gras.

Med. The shoes?

Sir Fop. Piccar.

Dor. The periwig?

Sir Fop. Chedreux.

Lady Town. and Emil. The gloves?

Sir Fop. Orangerie! You know the smell, ladies. Dorimant, I could find in my heart for an amusement to have a gallantry with some of our English ladies.

Dor. 'Tis a thing no less necessary to confirm the reputation of your wit than a duel will be to satisfy the town of your courage.

Sir Fop. Here was a woman yesterday——

Dor. Mistress Loveit?

Sir Fop. You have named her!

Dor. You cannot pitch on a better for your purpose.

Sir Fop. Prithee, what is she?

Dor. A person of quality, and one who has a rest of reputation enough to make the conquest considerable; besides, I hear she likes you, too.

Sir Fop. Methought she seemed, though, very reserved and uneasy all the time I entertained her.

Dor. Grimace and affectation! You will see her i'th' Mall to-night.

Sir Fop. Prithee, let thee and I take the air together.

Dor. I am engaged to Medley, but I'll meet you at Saint James's and give you some information upon the which you may regulate your proceedings.

Sir Fop. All the world will be in the Park to-night. Ladies, 'twere pity to keep so much beauty longer within doors and rob the Ring of all those charms that should adorn it.—Hey, page!

Enter Page—

See that all my people be ready.

[*and goes out again.*

—Dorimant, *a revoir.* [*Exit* Sir Fopling.

Med. A fine, mettled coxcomb.
Dor. Brisk and insipid.
Med. Pert and dull.
Emil. However you despise him, gentlemen, I'll lay my life he passes for a wit with many.
Dor. That may very well be; Nature has her cheats, stums a brain, and puts sophisticate dulness often on the tasteless multitude for true wit and good humor. Medley, come.
Med. I must go a little way; I will meet you i'the Mall.
Dor. I'll walk through the Garden thither. [*To the women*] We shall meet anon and bow.
Lady Town. Not to-night. We are engaged about a business the knowledge of which may make you laugh hereafter.
Med. Your servant, ladies.
Dor. "A revoir," as Sir Fopling says.
[*Exeunt* DORIMANT *and* MEDLEY.
Lady Town. The old man will be here immediately.
Emil. Let's expect him i'th' garden——
Lady Town. Go! you are a rogue.
Emil. I can't abide you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The Mall.

Enter HARRIET *and* YOUNG BELLAIR, *she pulling him.*

Har. Come along.
Young Bell. And leave your mother?
Har. Busy will be sent with a hue and cry after us, but that's no matter.
Young Bell. 'Twill look strangely in me.
Har. She'll believe it a freak of mine and never blame your manners.
Young Bell. What reverend acquaintance is that she has met?
Har. A fellow-beauty of the last king's time, though by the ruins you would hardly guess it.
[*Exeunt* HARRIET *and* YOUNG BELLAIR.

Enter DORIMANT *and crosses the stage.*

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR *and* HARRIET.

Young Bell. By this time your mother is in a fine taking.
Har. If your friend Mr. Dorimant were but here now, that she might find me talking with him!
Young Bell. She does not know him, but dreads him, I hear, of all mankind.
Har. She concludes if he does but speak to a woman, she's undone—is on her knees every day to pray Heaven defend me from him.
Young Bell. You do not apprehend him so much as she does?
Har. I never saw anything in him that was frightful.
Young Bell. On the contrary, have you not observed something extreme delightful in his wit and person?
Har. He's agreeable and pleasant, I must own; but he does so much affect being so, he displeases me.
Young Bell. Lord, madam! all he does and says is so easy and so natural!
Har. Some men's verses seem so to the unskillful, but labor i'the one and affectation in the other to the judicious plainly appear.
Young Bell. I never heard him accused of affectation before.

Enter DORIMANT *and stares upon her.*

Har. It passes on the easy town, who are favorably pleased in him to call it humor.
[*Exeunt* YOUNG BELLAIR *and* HARRIET.
Dor. 'Tis she! it must be she—that lovely hair, that easy shape, those wanton eyes, and all those melting charms about her mouth which Medley spoke of! I'll follow the lottery and put in for a prize with my friend Bellair. [*Exit* DORIMANT *repeating.*

In love the victors from the vanquished fly;
They fly that wound, and they pursue that die.

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR *and* HARRIET; *and after them,* DORIMANT, *at a distance.*

Young Bell. Most people prefer High Park to this place.
Har. It has the greater reputation, I confess; but I abominate the dull diversions there, the formal bows, the affected smiles, the silly by-words and amorous tweers in passing. Here one meets with a little conversation now and then.
Young Bell. These conversations have been fatal to some of your sex, madam.
Har. It may be so; because some who want temper have been undone by gaming, must others who have it wholly deny themselves the pleasure of play?
Dor. [*coming up gently and bowing to her*]. Trust me, it were unreasonable, madam.
Har. [*She starts and looks grave.*] Lord, who's this?
Young Bell. Dorimant.
Dor. [*aside*]. Is this the woman your father would have you marry?
Young Bell. It is.
Dor. Her name?
Young Bell. Harriet.
Dor. I am not mistaken; she's handsome.
Young Bell. Talk to her; her wit is better than her face. We were wishing for you but now.
Dor. [*to* HARRIET]. Overcast with seriousness o'the sudden! A thousand smiles were shining in that face but now; I never saw so quick a change of weather.

Har. [*aside*]. I feel as great a change within; but he shall never know it.

Dor. You were talking of play, madam. Pray, what may be your stint?

Har. A little harmless discourse in public walks, or at most an appointment in a box, bare faced, at the playhouse. You are for masks and private meetings, where women engage for all they are worth, I hear.

Dor. I have been used to deep play, but I can make one at small game when I like my gamester well.

Har. And be so unconcerned you'll ha' no pleasure in't.

Dor. Where there is a considerable sum to be won, the hope of drawing people in makes every trifle considerable.

Har. The sordidness of men's natures, I know, makes 'em willing to flatter and comply with the rich, though they are sure never to be the better for 'em.

Dor. 'Tis in their power to do us good, and we despair not but at some time or other they may be willing.

Har. To men who have fared in this town like you, 'twould be a great mortification to live on hope. Could you keep a Lent for a mistress?

Dor. In expectation of a happy Easter and, though time be very precious, think forty days well lost to gain your favor.

Har. Mr. Bellair, let us walk; 'tis time to leave him. Men grow dull when they begin to be particular.

Dor. You're mistaken; flattery will not ensue, though I know you're greedy of the praises of the whole Mall.

Har. You do me wrong.

Dor. I do not. As I followed you, I observed how you were pleased when the fops cried, "She's handsome, very handsome! By God, she is!" and whispered aloud your name. The thousand several forms you put your face into, then, to make yourself more agreeable! How wantonly you played with your head, flung back your locks, and looked smilingly over your shoulder at 'em!

Har. I do not go begging the men's, as you do the ladies', good liking, with a sly softness in your looks and a gentle slowness in your bows as you pass 'em—as thus, sir. [*Acts him*] Is not this like you?

Enter Lady Woodvil *and* Busy.

Young Bell. Your mother, madam. [*Pulls* Harriet; *she composes herself.*]

Lady Wood. Ah, my dear child Harriet!

Busy. Now is she so pleased with finding her again she cannot chide her.

Lady Wood. Come away!

Dor. 'Tis now but high Mall, madam, the most entertaining time of the evening.

Har. I would fain see that Dorimant, mother, you so cry out of for a monster; he's in the Mall, I hear.

Lady Wood. Come away then! The plague is here and you should dread the infection.

Young Bell. You may be misinformed of the gentleman.

Lady Wood. Oh, no! I hope you do not know him. He is the prince of all the devils in the town—delights in nothing but in rapes and riots!

Dor. If you did but hear him speak, madam!

Lady Wood. Oh, he has a tongue, they say, would tempt the angels to a second fall.

Enter Sir Fopling *with his equipage, six Footmen and a Page.*

Sir Fop. Hey! Champagne, Norman, La Rose, La Fleur, La Tour, La Verdure!—Dorimant!

Lady Wood. Here, here he is among this rout! He names him! Come away, Harriet; come away.

[*Exeunt* Lady Woodvil, Harriet, Busy, *and* Young Bellair.

Dor. This fool's coming has spoiled all. She's gone, but she has left a pleasing image of herself behind that wanders in my soul—it must not settle there.

Sir Fop. What reverie is this? Speak, man!

Dor. Snatched from myself, how far behind
Already I behold the shore!

Enter Medley.

Med. Dorimant, a discovery! I met with Bellair.

Dor. You can tell me no news, sir; I know all.

Med. How do you like the daughter?

Dor. You never came so near truth in your life as you did in her description.

Med. What think you of the mother?

Dor. Whatever I think of her, she thinks very well of me, I find.

Med. Did she know you?

Dor. She did not; whether she does now or no, I know not. Here was a pleasant scene towards, when in came Sir Fopling mustering up his equipage, and at the latter end named me and frighted her away.

Med. Loveit and Bellinda are not far off; I saw 'em alight at St. James's.

Dor. Sir Fopling! Hark you, a word or two. [*Whispers*] Look you do not want assurance.

Sir Fop. I never do on these occasions.

Dor. Walk on; we must not be seen together. Make your advantage of what I have told you. The next turn you will meet the lady.

Sir Fop. Hey! Follow me all!

[*Exeunt* Sir Fopling *and his equipage.*

Dor. Medley, you shall see good sport anon between Loveit and this Fopling.

Med. I thought there was something toward, by that whisper.

Dor. You know a worthy principle of hers?

Med. Not to be so much as civil to a man who speaks to her in the presence of him she professes to love.

Dor. I have encouraged Fopling to talk to her to-night.

Med. Now you are here, she will go nigh to beat him.

Dor. In the humor she's in, her love will make her do some very extravagant thing doubtless.

Med. What was Bellinda's business with you at my Lady Townley's?

Dor. To get me to meet Loveit here in order to an *éclairissement.* I made some difficulty of it and have prepared this rencounter to make good my jealousy.

Med. Here they come!

Enter Mrs. Loveit, Bellinda, *and* Pert.

Dor. I'll meet her and provoke her with a deal of dumb civility in passing by, then turn short and be behind her when Sir Fopling sets upon her——

See how unregarded now
That piece of beauty passes.

[*Exeunt* Dorimant *and* Medley.

Bel. How wonderful respectfully he bowed!

Pert. He's always over-mannerly when he has done a mischief.

Bel. Methought, indeed, at the same time he had a strange, despising countenance.

Pert. The unlucky look, he thinks, becomes him.

Bel. I was afraid you would have spoken to him, my dear.

Mrs. Lov. I would have died first. He shall no more find me the loving fool he has done.

Bel. You love him still?

Mrs. Lov. No!

Pert. I wish you did not.

Mrs. Lov. I do not, and I will have you think so. What made you hale me to this odious place, Bellinda?

Bel. I hate to be hulched up in a coach; walking is much better.

Mrs. Lov. Would we could meet Sir Fopling now!

Bel. Lord, would you not avoid him?

Mrs. Lov. I would make him all the advances that may be.

Bel. That would confirm Dorimant's suspicion, my dear.

Mrs. Lov. He is not jealous; but I will make him so, and be revenged a way he little thinks on.

Bel. [*aside*]. If she should make him jealous, that may make him fond of her again. I must dissuade her from it. Lord, my dear, this will certainly make him hate you.

Mrs. Lov. 'Twill make him uneasy, though he does not care for me. I know the effects of jealousy on men of his proud temper.

Bel. 'Tis a fantastic remedy; its operations are dangerous and uncertain.

Mrs. Lov. 'Tis the strongest cordial we can give to dying love. It often brings it back when there's no sign of life remaining. But I design not so much the reviving his, as my revenge.

Enter Sir Fopling *and his equipage.*

Sir Fop. Hey! Bid the coachman send home four of his horses and bring the coach to Whitehall; I'll walk over the Park. Madam, the honor of kissing your fair hands is a happiness I missed this afternoon at my Lady Townley's.

Mrs. Lov. You were very obliging, Sir Fopling, the last time I saw you there.

Sir Fop. The preference was due to your wit and beauty. Madam, your servant; there never was so sweet an evening.

Bel. 'T has drawn all the rabble of the town hither.

Sir Fop. 'Tis pity there's not an order made that none but the *beau monde* should walk here.

Mrs. Lov. 'Twould add much to the beauty of the place. See what a sort of nasty fellows are coming.

Enter three ill-fashioned fellows, singing:

'Tis not for kisses alone, etc.

Mrs. Lov. Fo! Their periwigs are scented with tobacco so strong——

Sir Fop. It overcomes our pulvilio—methinks I smell the coffee-house they come from.

1st Man. Dorimant's convenient, Madam Loveit.

2d Man. I like the oily buttock with her.

3d Man. What spruce prig is that?

1st Man. A caravan lately come from Paris.

2d Man. Peace! they smoke.

[*They sing again.*

There's something else to be done, etc.

[*All of them coughing; exeunt singing.*

Enter Dorimant *and* Medley.

Dor. They're engaged.

Med. She entertains him as if she liked him!

Dor. Let us go forward—seem earnest in discourse and show ourselves; then you shall see how she'll use him.

Bel. Yonder's Dorimant, my dear.

Mrs. Lov. I see him. [*Aside*] He comes insulting, but I will disappoint him in his expectation. [*To* SIR FOPLING] I like this pretty, nice humor of yours, Sir Fopling. With what a loathing eye he looked upon those fellows!

Sir Fop. I sat near one of 'em at a play to-day and was almost poisoned with a pair of cordovan gloves he wears.

Mrs. Lov. Oh, filthy cordovan! How I hate the smell!

[*Laughs in a loud, affected way.*

Sir Fop. Did you observe, madam, how their cravats hung loose an inch from their necks and what a frightful air it gave 'em?

Mrs. Lov. Oh, I took particular notice of one that is always spruced up with a deal of dirty sky-colored ribband.

Bel. That's one of the walking flageolets who haunt the Mall o'nights.

Mrs. Lov. Oh, I remember him; he's a hollow tooth enough to spoil the sweetness of an evening.

Sir Fop. I have seen the tallest walk the streets with a dainty pair of boxes neatly buckled on.

Mrs. Lov. And a little foot-boy at his heels, pocket-high, with a flat cap, a dirty face——

Sir Fop. And a snotty nose.

Mrs. Lov. Oh, odious!—There's many of my own sex with that Holborn equipage trig to Gray's Inn Walks and now and then travel hither on a Sunday.

Med. She takes no notice of you.

Dor. Damn her! I am jealous of a counterplot!

Mrs. Lov. Your liveries are the finest, Sir Fopling—Oh, that page! that page is the prettili'st dressed—they are all Frenchmen?

Sir Fop. There's one damned English blockhead among 'em; you may know him by his mien.

Mrs. Lov. Oh, that's he—that's he! What do you call him?

Sir Fop. Hey—I know not what to call him——

Footman. John Trott, madam.

Sir Fop. Oh, unsufferable! Trott, Trott, Trott! There's nothing so barbarous as the names of our English servants. What countryman are you, sir?

Footman. Hampshire, sir.

Sir Fop. Then Hampshire be your name. Hey, Hampshire!

Mrs. Lov. Oh, that sound, that sound becomes the mouth of a man of quality!

Med. Dorimant, you look a little bashful on the matter.

Dor. She dissembles better than I thought she could have done.

Med. You have tempted her with too luscious a bait. She bites at the coxcomb.

Dor. She cannot fall from loving me, to that.

Med. You begin to be jealous in earnest.

Dor. Of one I do not love——

Med. You did love her.

Dor. The fit has long been over——

Med. But I have known men fall into dangerous relapses when they found a woman inclining to another.

Dor. [*to himself*]. He guesses the secret of my heart! I am concerned but dare not show it, lest Bellinda should mistrust all I have done to gain her.

Bel. [*aside*]. I have watched his look and find no alteration there. Did he love her, some signs of jealousy would have appeared.

Dor. I hope this happy evening, madam, has reconciled you to the scandalous Mall. We shall have you now hankering here again.

Mrs. Lov. Sir Fopling, will you walk?

Sir Fop. I am all obedience, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Come along then, and let's agree to be malicious on all the ill-fashioned things we meet.

Sir Fop. We'll make a critique on the whole Mall, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Bellinda, you shall engage——

Bel. To the reserve of our friends, my dear.

Mrs. Lov. [*to* SIR FOPLING]. No, no exceptions.

Sir Fop. We'll sacrifice all to our diversion——

Mrs. Lov. All—all——

Sir Fop. All.

Bel. All? Then let it be.

[*Exeunt* SIR FOPLING, MRS. LOVEIT, BELLINDA, *and* PERT, *laughing.*

Med. Would you had brought some more of your friends, Dorimant, to have been witnesses of Sir Fopling's disgrace and your triumph.

Dor. 'Twere unreasonable to desire you not to laugh at me; but pray, do not expose me to the town this day or two.

Med. By that time you have hope to have regained your credit?

Dor. I know she hates Fopling and only makes use of him in hope to work on me again. Had it not been for some powerful considerations which will be removed tomorrow morning, I had made her pluck off this mask and show the passion that lies panting under.

Enter a Footman.

Med. Here comes a man from Bellair with news of your last adventure.

Dor. I am glad he sent him. I long to know the consequence of our parting.

Footman. Sir, my master desires you to come to my Lady Townley's presently and

bring Mr. Medley with you. My Lady Woodvil and her daughter are there.

Med. Then all's well, Dorimant.

Footman. They have sent for the fiddles and mean to dance. He bid me tell you, sir, the old lady does not know you, and would have you own yourself to be Mr. Courtage. They are all prepared to receive you by that name.

Dor. That foppish admirer of quality, who flatters the very meat at honorable tables and never offers love to a woman below a lady-grandmother?

Med. You know the character you are to act, I see.

Dor. This is Harriet's contrivance—wild, witty, lovesome, beautiful, and young! Come along, Medley.

Med. This new woman would well supply the loss of Loveit.

Dor. That business must not end so; before to-morrow's sun is set I will revenge and clear it.

And you and Loveit, to her cost, shall find,
I fathom all the depths of womankind.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

LADY TOWNLEY'S *drawing-room.*

The scene opens with fiddlers playing a country dance.

Enter DORIMANT, LADY WOODVIL, YOUNG BELLAIR, *and* MRS. HARRIET, OLD BELLAIR *and* EMILIA, MR. MEDLEY *and* LADY TOWNLEY, *as having just ended the dance.*

Old Bell. So, so, so—a smart bout! a very smart bout, adod!

Lady Town. How do you like Emilia's dancing, brother?

Old Bell. Not at all—not at all!

Lady Town. You speak not what you think, I am sure.

Old Bell. No matter for that; go, bid her dance no more. It don't become her—it don't become her! Tell her I say so. [*Aside*] Adod, I love her!

Dor. [*to* LADY WOODVIL]. All people mingle nowadays, madam, and in public places women of quality have the least respect showed 'em.

Lady Wood. I protest you say the truth, Mr. Courtage.

Dor. Forms and ceremonies, the only things that uphold quality and greatness, are now shamefully laid aside and neglected.

Lady Wood. Well, this is not the women's age, let 'em think what they will; lewdness is the business now; love was the business in my time.

Dor. The women, indeed, are little beholding to the young men of this age; they're generally only dull admirers of themselves, and make their court to nothing but their periwigs and cravats, and would be more concerned for the disordering of 'em, tho' on a good occasion, than a young maid would be for the tumbling of her head or handkercher.

Lady Wood. I protest you hit 'em.

Dor. They are very assiduous to show themselves at court, well dressed, to the women of quality, but their business is with the stale mistresses of the town, who are prepared to receive their lazy addresses by industrious old lovers who have cast 'em off and make 'em easy.

Har. [*to* MEDLEY]. He fits my mother's humor so well, a little more and she'll dance a kissing dance with him anon.

Med. Dutifully observed, madam.

Dor. [*to* LADY WOODVIL]. They pretend to be great critics in beauty. By their talk you would think they liked no face, and yet can dote on an ill one if it belong to a laundress or a tailor's daughter. They cry, "A woman's past her prime at twenty, decayed at four-and-twenty, and unsufferable at thirty."

Lady Wood. Unsufferable at thirty! That they are in the wrong, Mr. Courtage, at five-and-thirty, there are living proofs enough to convince 'em.

Dor. Aye, madam. There's Mrs. Setlooks, Mrs. Droplip, and my Lady Loud; show me among all our opening buds a face that promises so much beauty as the remains of theirs.

Lady Wood. The depraved appetite of this vicious age tastes nothing but green fruit, and loathes it when 'tis kindly ripened.

Dor. Else so many deserving women, madam, would not be so untimely neglected.

Lady Wood. I protest, Mr. Courtage, a dozen such good men as you would be enough to atone for that wicked Dorimant and all the other debauchees of the town. [HARRIET, EMILIA, YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, *and* LADY TOWNLEY *break out into laughter*] What's the matter here?

Med. A pleasant mistake, madam, that a lady has made, occasions a little laughter.

Old Bell. Come, come; you keep 'em idle! They are impatient till the fiddles play again.

Dor. You are not weary, madam?

Lady Wood. One dance more! I cannot refuse you, Mr. Courtage.

[*They dance. After the dance* OLD BELLAIR, *singing and dancing, goes up to* EMILIA.]

Emil. You are very active, sir.

Old Bell. Adod, sirrah when I was a

young fellow I could ha' capered up to my woman's gorget.

Dor. [*to* LADY WOODVIL]. You are willing to rest yourself, madam?

Lady Town. [*to* MEDLEY]. We'll walk into my chamber and sit down.

Med. Leave us Mr. Courtage; he's a dancer, and the young ladies are not weary yet.

Lady Wood. We'll send him out again.

Har. If you do not quickly, I know where to send for Mr. Dorimant.

Lady Wood. This girl's head, Mr. Courtage, is ever running on that wild fellow.

Dor. 'Tis well you have got her a good husband, madam; that will settle it.

[*Exeunt* LADY TOWNLEY, LADY WOODVIL, *and* DORIMANT.

Old Bell. [*to* EMILIA]. Adod, sweetheart, be advised and do not throw thyself away on a young, idle fellow.

Emil. I have no such intention, sir.

Old Bell. Have a little patience! Thou shalt have the man I spake of. Adod, he loves thee and will make a good husband—but no words——

Emil. But, sir——

Old Bell. No answer—out a pize! peace! and think on't.

Enter DORIMANT.

Dor. Your company is desired within, sir.

Old Bell. I go, I go! Good Mr. Courtage, fare you well!—[*To* EMILIA] Go, I'll see you no more!

Emil. What have I done, sir?

Old Bell. You are ugly! you are ugly!—is she not, Mr. Courtage?

Emil. Better words or I shan't abide you.

Old Bell. Out a pize; adod, what does she say? Hit her a pat for me there.

[*Exit* OLD BELLAIR.

Med. You have charms for the whole family.

Dor. You'll spoil all with some unseasonable jest, Medley.

Med. You see I confine my tongue and am content to be a bare spectator, much contrary to my nature.

Emil. Methinks, Mr. Dorimant, my Lady Woodvil is a little fond of you.

Dor. Would her daughter were:

Med. It may be you may find her so. Try her, you have an opportunity.

Dor. And I will not lose it. Bellair, here's a lady has something to say to you.

Young Bell. I wait upon her. Mr. Medley, we have both business with you.

Dor. Get you all together then. [*To* HARRIET] That demure curtsey is not amiss in jest, but do not tnink in earnest it becomes you.

Har. Affectation is catching, I find; from your grave bow I got it.

Dor. Where had you all that scorn and coldness in your look?

Har. From nature, sir; pardon my want of art. I have not learnt those softnesses and languishings which now in faces are so much in fashion.

Dor. You need 'em not; you have a sweetness of your own if you would but calm your frowns and let it settle.

Har. My eyes are wild and wandering like my passions, and cannot yet be tied to rules of charming.

Dor. Women, indeed, have commonly a method of managing those messengers of love. Now they will look as if they would kill, and anon they will look as if they were dying. They point and rebate their glances, the better to invite us.

Har. I like this variety well enough, but hate the set face that always looks as if it would say, "Come, love me"—a woman who at plays makes the *doux yeux* to a whole audience and at home cannot forbear 'em to her monkey.

Dor. Put on a gentle smile and let me see how well it will become you.

Har. I am sorry my face does not please you as it is, but I shall not be complaisant and change it.

Dor. Though you are obstinate, I know 'tis capable of improvement and shall do you justice, madam, if I chance to be at Court when the critics of the circle pass their judgment; for thither you must come.

Har. And expect to be taken in pieces, have all my features examined, every motion censured, and on the whole be condemned to be but pretty, or a beauty of the lowest rate. What think you?

Dor. The women, nay, the very lovers who belong to the Drawing-room, will maliciously allow you more than that. They always grant what is apparent, that they may the better be believed when they name concealed faults they cannot easily be disproved in.

Har. Beauty runs as great a risk exposed at Court as wit does on the stage, where the ugly and foolish all are free to censure.

Dor. [*aside*]. I love her and dare not let her know it; I fear she has an ascendant o'er me and may revenge the wrongs I have done her sex. [*To her*] Think of making a party, madam, love will engage.

Har. You make me start! I did not think to have heard of love from you.

Dor. I never knew what 'twas to have a settled ague yet, but now and then have had irregular fits.

Har. Take heed; sickness after long health is commonly more violent and dangerous.

Dor. [*aside*]. I have took the infection from her, and feel the disease now spreading

in me. [*To her*] Is the name of love so frightful that you dare not stand it?

Har. 'Twill do little execution out of your mouth on me, I'm sure.

Dor. It has been fatal——

Har. To some easy women, but we are not all born to one destiny. I was informed you use to laugh at love and not make it.

Dor. The time has been, but now I must speak——

Har. If it be on that idle subject, I will put on my serious look, turn my head carelessly from you, drop my lip, let my eyelids fall and hang half o'er my eyes—thus—while you will buzz a speech of an hour long in my ear, and I answer never a word. Why do you not begin?

Dor. That the company may take notice how passionately I make advances of love! And how disdainfully you receive 'em.

Har. When your love's grown strong enough to make you bear being laughed at, I'll give you leave to trouble me with it; till then pray forbear, sir.

Enter Sir Fopling *and others in masks.*

Dor. What's here, masquerades?

Har. I thought that foppery had been left off, and people might have been in private with a fiddle.

Dor. 'Tis endeavored to be kept on foot still by some who find themselves the more acceptable the less they are known.

Young Bell. This must be Sir Fopling.

Med. This extraordinary habit shows it.

Young Bell. What are the rest?

Med. A company of French rascals whom he picked up in Paris and has brought over to be his dancing equipage on these occasions. Make him own himself; a fool is very troublesome when he presumes he is incognito.

Sir Fop. [*to* Harriet]. Do you know me?

Har. Ten to one but I guess at you.

Sir Fop. Are you women as fond of a vizard as we men are?

Har. I am very fond of a vizard that covers a face I do not like, sir.

Young Bell. Here are no masks, you see, sir, but those which came with you. This was intended a private meeting; but because you look like a gentleman, if you will discover yourself and we know you to be such, you shall be welcome.

Sir Fop. [*pulling off his mask*]. Dear Bellair!

Med. Sir Fopling! How came you hither?

Sir Fop. Faith, as I was coming late from Whitehall, after the King's *couchée*, one of my people told me he had heard fiddles at my Lady Townley's, and——

Dor. You need not say any more, sir.

Sir Fop. Dorimant, let me kiss thee.

Dor. Hark you, Sir Fopling——

[*Whispers.*

Sir Fop. Enough, enough, Courtage.—A pretty kind of young woman that, Medley. I observed her in the Mall—more *evelié* than our English women commonly are. Prithee, what is she?

Med. The most noted coquetté in town. Beware of her.

Sir Fop. Let her be what she will, I know how to take my measures. In Paris the mode is to flatter the *prudè*, laugh at the *faux-prudè*, make serious love to the *demi-prudè*, and only rally with the *coquetté*.—Medley, what think you?

Med. That for all this smattering of mathematics, you may be out in your judgment at tennis.

Sir Fop. What a *coq-à-l'âne* is this? I talk of women and thou answer'st tennis.

Med. Mistakes will be for want of apprehension.

Sir Fop. I am very glad of the acquaintance I have with this family.

Med. My lady truly is a good woman.

Sir Fop. Ah, Dorimant—Courtage, I would say—would thou hadst spent the last summer in Paris with me! When thou wert there, La Corneus and Sallyes were the only habitués we had: a comedian would have been a *bonne fortune*. No stranger ever passed his time so well as I did some months before I came over. I was well received in a dozen families where all the women of quality used to visit; I have intrigues to tell thee more pleasant than ever thou read'st in a novel.

Har. Write 'em, sir, and oblige us women. Our language wants such little stories.

Sir Fop. Writing, madam, 's a mechanic part of wit. A gentleman should never go beyond a song or a billet.

Har. Bussy was a gentleman.

Sir Fop. Who, d'Ambois?

Med. Was there ever such a brisk blockhead!

Har. Not d'Ambois, sir, but Rabutin—he who writ the loves of France.

Sir Fop. That may be, madam; many gentlemen do things that are below 'em. Damn your authors, Courtage; women are the prettiest things we can fool away our time with.

Har. I hope ye have wearied yourself tonight at Court, sir, and will not think of fooling with anybody here.

Sir Fop. I cannot complain of my fortune there, madam.—Dorimant——

Dor. Again!

Sir Fop. Courtage—a pox on't! I have something to tell thee. When I had made my court within, I came out and flung myself upon the mat under the state i'th' outward room, i'th' midst of half a dozen beau-

ties who were withdrawn "to jeer among themselves," as they called it.

Dor. Did you know 'em?

Sir Fop. Not one of 'em, by heavens!—not I; but they were all your friends.

Dor. How are you sure of that?

Sir Fop. Why, we laughed at all the town—spared nobody but yourself. They found me a man for their purpose.

Dor. I know you are malicious, to your power.

Sir Fop. And faith, I had occasion to show it, for I never saw more gaping fools at a ball or on a birthday.

Dor. You learned who the women were?

Sir Fop. No matter; they frequent the drawing-room.

Dor. And entertain themselves pleasantly at the expense of all the fops who come there.

Sir Fop. That's their bus'ness. Faith, I sifted 'em, and find they have a sort of wit among them— Ah, filthy!

[*Pinches a tallow candle.*

Dor. Look, he has been pinching the tallow candle.

Sir Fop. How can you breathe in a room where there's grease frying! Dorimant, thou art intimate with my lady; advise her for her own sake and the good company that comes hither, to burn wax lights.

Har. What are these masquerades who stand so obsequiously at a distance?

Sir Fop. A set of balladines whom I picked out of the best in France and brought over with a *flute-douce* or two—my servants. They shall entertain you.

Har. I had rather see you dance yourself, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. And I had rather do it—all the company knows it—but madam——

Med. Come, come, no excuses, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. By heavens, Medley——

Med. Like a woman I find you must be struggled with, before one brings you to what you desire.

Har. [*aside*]. Can he dance?

Emil. And fence and sing too, if you'll believe him.

Dor. He has no more excellence in his heels than in his head. He went to Paris a plain, bashful English blockhead, and is returned a fine undertaking French fop.

Med. I cannot prevail.

Sir Fop. Do not think it want of complaisance, madam.

Har. You are too well bred to want that, Sir Fopling. I believe it want of power.

Sir Fop. By heavens, and so it is! I have sat up so damned late and drunk so cursed hard since I came to this lewd town, that I am fit for nothing but low dancing now—a *corant*, a *bourée*, or a *minnuet*. But St. André tells me, if I will but be regular, in one month I shall rise again. [*Endeavors at a caper*]—Pox on this debauchery!

Emil. I have heard your dancing much commended.

Sir Fop. It had the good fortune to please in Paris. I was judged to rise within an inch as high as the basqué in an entry I danced there.

Har. [*to* Emilia]. I am mightily taken with this fool; let us sit.—Here's a seat, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. At your feet, madam; I can be nowhere so much at ease.—By your leave, gown.

Har. and Emil. Ah, you'll spoil it!

Sir Fop. No matter; my clothes are my creatures. I make 'em to make my court to you ladies. Hey! [*Dance*] *Qu'on commencè*—to an English dancer, English motions. I was forced to entertain this fellow, one of my set miscarrying.—Oh, horrid! Leave your damned manner of dancing and put on the French air. Have you not a pattern before you?—pretty well!—imitation in time may bring him to something.

After the dance, enter Old Bellair, Lady Woodvil, *and* Lady Townley.

Old Bell. Hey, adod, what have we here—a mumming?

Lady Wood. Where's my daughter—Harriet?

Dor. Here, here, madam! I know not but under these disguises there may be dangerous sparks; I gave the young lady warning.

Lady Wood. Lord! I am much obliged to you, Mr. Courtage.

Har. Lord, how you admire this man!

Lady Wood. What have you to except against him?

Har. He's a fop.

Lady Wood. He's not a Dorimant, a wild extravagant fellow of the times.

Har. He's a man made up of forms and commonplaces sucked out of the remaining lees of the last age.

Lady Wood. He's so good a man that, were you not engaged——

Lady Town. You'll have but little night to sleep in.

Lady Wood. Lord, 'tis perfect day.

Dor. [*aside*]. The hour is almost come I appointed Bellinda, and I am not so foppishly in love here to forget. I am flesh and blood yet.

Lady Town. I am very sensible, madam.

Lady Wood. Lord, madam!

Har. Look! in what a struggle is my poor mother yonder!

Young Bell. She has much ado to bring out the compliment.

Dor. She strains hard for it.

Har. See, see! her head tottering, her eyes staring, and her under lip trembling——

Dor. Now—now she's in the very convulsions of her civility. [*Aside*] 'Sdeath, I shall lose Bellinda! I must fright her hence; she'll be an hour in his fit of good manners else. [*To* Lady Wood.] Do you not know Sir Fopling, madam?

Lady Wood. I have seen that face—Oh, heaven! 'tis the same we met in the Mall! How came he here?

Dor. A fiddle, in this town, is a kind of fop-call; no sooner it strikes up but the house is besieged with an army of masquerades straight.

Lady Wood. Lord! I tremble, Mr. Courtage! For certain, Dorimant is in the company.

Dor. I cannot confidently say he is not. You had best be gone. I will wait upon you; your daughter is in the hands of Mr. Bellair.

Lady Wood. I'll see her before me. Harriet, come away.

Young Bell. Lights! lights!

Lady Town. Light, down there!

Old Bell. Adod, it needs not——

Dor. [*to the Servant entering*]. Call my Lady Woodvil's coach to the door quickly.

Old Bell. Stay, Mr. Medley. Let the young fellows do that duty; we will drink a glass of wine together. 'Tis good after dancing.—What mumming spark is that?

[*Points at* Sir Fopling.

Med. He is not to be comprehended in few words.

Sir Fop. Hey, La Tour!

Med. Whither away, Sir Fopling?

Sir Fop. I have bus'ness with Courtage.

Med. He'll but put the ladies into their coach and come up again.

Old Bell. In the meantime I'll call for a bottle. [*Exit* Old Bellair.

Enter Young Bellair.

Med. Where's Dorimant?

Young Bell. Stolen home. He has had business waiting him there all this night, I believe, by an impatience I observed in him.

Med. Very likely; 'tis but dissembling drunkenness, railing at his friends, and then the kind soul will embrace the blessing and forget the tedious expectation.

Sir Fop. I must speak with him before I sleep.

Young Bell. [*to* Medley]. Emilia and I are resolved on that business.

Med. Peace, here's your father.

Enter Old Bellair *and Butler with a bottle of wine.*

Old Bell. The women are all gone to bed. Fill, boy. Mr. Medley, begin a health.

Med. [*whispers*]. To Emilia!

Old Bell. Out a pize! she's a rogue and I'll not pledge you.

Med. I know you will.

Old Bell. Adod, drink it then!

Sir Fop. Let us have the new bacchic.

Old Bell. Adod, that is a hard word. What does it mean, sir?

Med. A catch or drinking song.

Old Bell. Let us have it then.

Sir Fop. Fill the glasses round and draw up in a body. Hey, music! [*They sing.*

The pleasures of love and the joys of good wine
To perfect our happiness, wisely we join.
We to beauty all day
Give the sovereign sway
And her favorite nymphs devoutly obey.
At the plays we are constantly making our court,
And when they are ended we follow the sport
To the Mall and the Park,
Where we love till 'tis dark.
Then sparkling champagne
Puts an end to their reign;
It quickly recovers
Poor languishing lovers;
Makes us frolic and gay, and drowns all our sorrow.
But alas! we relapse again on the morrow.
Let every man stand
With his glass in his hand,
And briskly discharge at the word of command:
Here's a health to all those
Whom to-night we depose!
Wine and beauty by turns great souls should inspire;
Present all together—and now, boys, give fire!

[*They drink.*

Old Bell. Adod! a pretty business and very merry.

Sir Fop. Hark you; Medley, let's you and I take the fiddles and go waken Dorimant.

Med. We shall do him a courtesy, if it be as I guess. For after the fatigue of this night he'll quickly have his belly full and be glad of an occasion to cry, "Take away, Handy!"

Young Bell. I'll go with you, and there we'll consult about affairs, Medley.

Old Bell. [*looks on his watch*]. Adod, 'tis six o'clock!

Sir Fop. Let's away then.

Old Bell. Mr. Medley, my sister tells me you are an honest man—and adod, I love you. Few words and hearty—that's the way with old Harry, old Harry.

Sir Fop. [*to his Servants*]. Light your flambeaux. Hey!

Old Bell. What does the man mean?

Med. 'Tis day, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. No matter; our serenade will look the greater. [*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE II

DORIMANT'S *lodging. A table, a candle, toilet articles, etc.;* HANDY, *tying up linen.*

Enter DORIMANT *in his gown, and* BELLINDA.

Dor. Why will you be gone so soon?

Bel. Why did you stay out so late?

Dor. Call a chair, Handy.—What makes you tremble so?

Bel. I have a thousand fears about me. Have I not been seen, think you?

Dor. By nobody but myself and trusty Handy.

Bel. Where are all your people?

Dor. I have dispersed 'em all on sleeveless errands. What does that sigh mean?

Bel. Can you be so unkind to ask me? [*Sighs*] Well—were it to do again——

Dor. We should do it, should we not?

Bel. I think we should—the wickeder man you, to make me love you so well.—Will you be discreet now?

Dor. I will.

Bel. You cannot.

Dor. Never doubt it.

Bel. I never will expect it.

Dor. You do me wrong.

Bel. You have no more power to keep a secret than I had not to trust you with it.

Dor. By all the joys I have had and those you keep in store——

Bel. —You'll do for my sake, what you never did before.

Dor. By that truth thou hast spoken, a wife shall sooner betray herself to her husband——

Bel. Yet I had rather you should be false in this than in another thing you promised me.

Dor. What's that?

Bel. That you would never see Loveit more but in public places, in the Park, at Court, and plays.

Dor. 'Tis not likely a man should be fond of seeing a damned old play when there is a new one acted.

Bel. I dare not trust your promise.

Dor. You may——

Bel. This does not satisfy me. You shall swear you never will see her more.

Dor. I will, a thousand oaths. By all——

Bel. Hold! You shall not, now I think on't better.

Dor. I will swear!

Bel. I shall grow jealous of the oath and think I owe your truth to that, not to your love.

Dor. Then, by my love, no other oath I'll swear.

Enter HANDY.

Handy. Here's a chair.

Bel. Let me go.

Dor. I cannot.

Bel. Too willingly, I fear.

Dor. Too unkindly feared. When will you promise me again?

Bel. Not this fortnight.

Dor. You will be better than your word.

Bel. I think I shall. Will it make you love me less? [*Starting; fiddles without*]—Hark, what fiddles are these?

Dor. Look out, Handy.

[*Exit* HANDY *and returns.*

Handy. Mr. Medley, Mr. Bellair, and Sir Fopling; they are coming up.

Dor. How got they in?

Handy. The door was open for the chair.

Bel. Lord! let me fly!

Dor. Here! here down the back stairs! I'll see you into your chair.

Bel. No, no! stay and receive 'em.—And be sure you keep your word and never see Loveit more. Let it be a proof of your kindness.

Dor. It shall.—Handy, direct her. [*Kissing her hand*] Everlasting love go along with thee. [*Exeunt* BELLINDA *and* HANDY.

Enter YOUNG BELLAIR, MEDLEY, *and* SIR FOPLING.

Young Bell. Not abed yet?

Med. You have had an irregular fit, Dorimant.

Dor. I have.

Young Bell. And is it off already?

Dor. Nature has done her part, gentlemen; when she falls kindly to work, great cures are effected in little time, you know.

Sir Fop. We thought there was a wench in the case, by the chair that waited. Prithee, make us a *confidancé.*

Dor. Excuse me.

Sir Fop. Lè sagè Dorimant!—Was she pretty?

Dor. So pretty she may come to keep her coach and pay parish duties if the good humor of the age continue.

Med. And be of the number of the ladies kept by public-spirited men for the good of the whole town.

Sir Fop. Well said, Medley.

[SIR FOPLING *dancing by himself.*

Young Bell. See Sir Fopling dancing!

Dor. You are practising and have a mind to recover, I see.

Sir Fop. Prithee, Dorimant, why hast thou not a glass hung up here? A room is the dullest thing without one.

Young Bell. Here is company to entertain you.

Sir Fop. But I mean in case of being

alone. In a glass a man may entertain himself——

Dor. The shadow of himself, indeed.

Sir Fop. Correct the errors of his motions and his dress.

Med. I find, Sir Fopling, in your solitude you remember the saying of the wise man, and study yourself.

Sir Fop. 'Tis the best diversion in our retirements. Dorimant, thou art a pretty fellow and wear'st thy clothes well, but I never saw thee have a handsome cravat. Were they made up like mine, they'd give another air to thy face. Prithee, let me send my man to dress thee but one a day. By heavens, an Englishman cannot tie a ribbon.

Dor. They are something clumsy fisted——

Sir Fop. I have brought over the prettiest fellow that ever spread a toilet. He served some time under Merille, the greatest *genie* in the world for a *valet-de-chambré*.

Dor. What, he who formerly belonged to the Duke of Candale?

Sir Fop. The same, and got him his immortal reputation.

Dor. Y'have a very fine brandenburg on, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. It serves to wrap me up after the fatigue of a ball.

Med. I see you often in it, with your periwig tied up.

Sir Fop. We should not always be in a set dress; 'tis more *en cavalier* to appear now and then in a *dessabillée*.

Med. Pray, how goes your business with Loveit?

Sir Fop. You might have answered yourself in the Mall last night. Dorimant, did you not see the advances she made me? I have been endeavoring at a song.

Dor. Already!

Sir Fop. 'Tis my *coup d'essai* in English; I would fain have thy opinion of it.

Dor. Let's see it.

Sir Fop. Hey, page, give me my song.—Bellair, here; thou hast a pretty voice—sing it.

Young Bell. Sing it yourself, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. Excuse me.

Young Bell. You learnt to sing in Paris.

Sir Fop. I did—of Lambert, the greatest master in the world. But I have my own fault, a weak voice, and care not to sing out of a *ruelle*.

Dor. A *ruelle* is a pretty cage for a singing fop, indeed.

Young Bell. [*reads the song*]

How charming Phyllis is, how fair!
Ah, that she were as willing
To ease my wounded heart of care,
And make her eyes less killing.
I sigh, I sigh, I languish now,
And love will not let me rest;
I drive about the Park and bow,
Still as I meet my dearest.

Sir Fop. Sing it! sing it, man; it goes to a pretty new tune which I am confident was made by Baptiste.

Med. Sing it yourself, Sir Fopling; he does not know the tune.

Sir Fop. I'll venture. [Sir Fopling *sings*.

Dor. Aye, marry! now 'tis something. I shall not flatter you, Sir Fopling; there is not much thought in't, but 'tis passionate and well turned.

Med. After the French way.

Sir Fop. That I aimed at. Does it not give you a lively image of the thing? Slap down goes the glass, and thus we are at it.

Dor. It does, indeed. I perceive, Sir Fopling, you'll be the very head of the sparks who are lucky in compositions of this nature.

Enter Sir Fopling's *Footman*.

Sir Fop. La Tour, is the bath ready?

Footm. Yes, sir.

Sir Fop. *Adieu donc, mes chers.*

[*Exit* Sir Fopling.

Med. When have you your revenge on Loveit, Dorimant?

Dor. I will but change my linen and about it.

Med. The powerful considerations which hindered, have been removed then?

Dor. Most luckily this morning. You must alone with me; my reputation lies at stake there.

Med. I am engaged to Bellair.

Dor. What's your business?

Med. Ma-tri-mony, an't like you.

Dor. It does not, sir.

Young Bell. It may in time, Dorimant. What think you of Mrs. Harriet?

Dor. What does she think of me?

Young Bell. I am confident she loves you.

Dor. How does it appear?

Young Bell. Why, she's never well but when she's talking of you; but then, she finds all the faults in you she can. She laughs at all who commend you; but then, she speaks ill of all who do not.

Dor. Women of her temper betray themselves by their over-cunning. I had once a growing quarrel with a lady who would always quarrel with me when I came to see her, and yet was never quiet if I stayed a day from her.

Young Bell. My father is in love with Emilia.

Dor. That is a good warrant for your proceedings. Go on and prosper; I must to Loveit. Medley, I am sorry you cannot be a witness.

Med. Make her meet Sir Fopling again in the same place and use him ill before me.

Dor. That may be brought about, I think. I'll be at your aunt's anon and give you joy, Mr. Bellair.

Young Bell. You had not best think of Mrs. Harriet too much; without church security there's no taking up there.

Dor. I may fall into the snare, too. But——

The wise will find a difference in our fate;
You wed a woman, I a good estate.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The street before MRS. LOVEIT'S *house.*

Enter the Chair with BELLINDA; *the men set it down and open it,* BELLINDA *starting.*

Bel. [*surprised*]. Lord, where am I?—in the Mall? Whither have you brought me?

1st Chairman. You gave us no directions, madam.

Bel. [*aside*]. The fright I was in made me forget it.

1st Chairman. We use to carry a lady from the Squire's hither.

Bel. [*aside*]. This is Loveit; I am undone if she sees me. Quickly, carry me away!

1st Chairman. Whither, an't like your honor?

Bel. Ask no questions——

Enter LOVEIT'S *Footman.*

Footm. Have you seen my lady, madam?

Bel. I am just come to wait upon her.

Footm. She will be glad to see you, madam. She sent me to you this morning to desire your company, and I was told you went out by five o'clock.

Bel. [*aside*]. More and more unlucky!

Footm. Will you walk in, madam?

Bel. I'll discharge my chair and follow. Tell your mistress I am here. [*Exit Footman*] Take this [*Gives the Chairmen money*], and if ever you should be examined, say you took me up in the Strand over against the Exchange, as you will answer it to Mr. Dorimant.

Chairmen. We will, an't like your honor.

[*Exeunt Chairmen.*

Bel. Now to come off, I must on——

In confidence and lies some hope is left;
'Twere hard to be found out in the first theft.

[*Exit* BELLINDA.

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter MRS. LOVEIT *and* PERT, *her woman.*

Pert. Well, in my eyes Sir Fopling is no such despicable person.

Mrs. Lov. You are an excellent judge.

Pert. He's as handsome a man as Mr. Dorimant, and as great a gallant.

Mrs. Lov. Intolerable! Is't not enough I submit to his impertinences but must I be plagued with yours, too?

Pert. Indeed, madam——

Mrs. Lov. 'Tis false, mercenary malice——

Enter her Footman.

Footm. Mrs. Bellinda, madam——

Mrs. Lov. What of her?

Footm. She's below.

Mrs. Lov. How came she?

Footm. In a chair; Ambling Harry brought her.

Mrs. Lov. He bring her? His chair stands near Dorimant's door and always brings me from thence.—Run and ask him where he took her up. Go! There is no truth in friendship neither. Women, as well as men, all are false, or all are so to me, at least.

Pert. You are jealous of her, too?

Mrs. Lov. You had best tell her I am. 'Twill become the liberty you take of late. This fellow's bringing of her, her going out by five o'clock—I know not what to think.

Enter BELLINDA.

Bellinda, you are grown an early riser, I hear.

Bel. Do you not wonder, my dear, what made me abroad so soon?

Mrs. Lov. You do not use to be so.

Bel. The country gentlewomen I told you of (Lord, they have the oddest diversions!) would never let me rest till I promised to go with them to the markets this morning to eat fruit and buy nosegays.

Mrs. Lov. Are they so fond of a filthy nosegay?

Bel. They complain of the stinks of the town, and are never well but when they have their noses in one.

Mrs. Lov. There are essences and sweet waters.

Bel. Oh, they cry out upon perfumes, they are unwholesome; one of 'em was falling into a fit with the smell of these *narolii.*

Mrs. Lov. Methinks in compliance you should have had a nosegay, too.

Bel. Do you think, my dear, I could be so loathsome, to trick myself up with carnations and stock gillyflowers? I begged their pardon and told them I never wore anything but orange flowers and tuberose. That which made me willing to go, was a strange desire I had to eat some fresh nectarines.

Mrs. Lov. And had you any?

Bel. The best I ever tasted.

Mrs. Lov. Whence came you now?

Bel. From their lodgings, where I crowded out of a coach and took a chair to come and see you, my dear.

Mrs. Lov. Whither did you send for that chair?

Bel. 'Twas going by empty.

Mrs. Lov. Where do these countrywomen lodge, I pray?

Bel. In the Strand over against the Exchange.

Pert. The place is never without a nest of 'em. They are always, as one goes by, fleering in balconies or staring out of windows.

Enter Footman.

Mrs. Lov. [*to the Footman*]. Come hither! [*Whispers.*

Bel. [*aside*]. This fellow by her order has been questioning the chairmen. I threatened 'em with the name of Dorimant; if they should have told truth, I am lost forever.

Mrs. Lov. In the Strand, said you?

Footm. Yes, madam; over against the Exchange. [*Exit Footman.*

Mrs. Lov. She's innocent, and I am much to blame.

Bel. [*aside*]. I am so frighted my countenance will betray me.

Mrs. Lov. Bellinda, what makes you look so pale?

Bel. Want of my usual rest and jolting up and down so long in an odious hackney.

Footman returns.

Footm. Madam, Mr. Dorimant.

Mrs. Lov. What makes him here?

Bel. [*aside*]. Then I am betrayed, indeed. He's broken his word and I love a man that does not care for me!

Mrs. Lov. Lord, you faint, Bellinda!

Bel. I think I shall—such an oppression here on the sudden.

Pert. She has eaten too much fruit I warrant you.

Mrs. Lov. Not unlikely.

Pert. 'Tis that lies heavy on her stomach.

Mrs. Lov. Have her into my chamber, give her some surfeit water, and let her lie down a little.

Pert. Come, madam, I was a strange devourer of fruit when I was young, so ravenous——

[*Exeunt* Bellinda *and* Pert *leading her off.*

Mrs. Lov. Oh, that my love would be but calm awhile, that I might receive this man with all the scorn and indignation he deserves!

Enter Dorimant.

Dor. Now for a touch of Sir Fopling to begin with.—Hey, page, give positive order that none of these people stir. Let the *canaille* wait as they should do. Since noise and nonsense have such powerful charms,

I, that I may successful prove,
Transform myself to what you love.

Mrs. Lov. If that would do, you need not change from what you are. You can be vain and loud enough.

Dor. But not with so good a grace as Sir Fopling.—"Hey, Hampshire!"—"Oh, that sound, that sound becomes a man of quality!"

Mrs. Lov. Is there a thing so hateful as a senseless mimic?

Dor. He's a great grievance to all who, like yourself, madam, love to play the fool in quiet.

Mrs. Lov. A ridiculous animal, who has more of the ape than the ape has of the man in him!

Dor. I have as mean an opinion of a sheer mimic as yourself; yet were he all ape, I should prefer him to the gay, the giddy, brisk, insipid, noisy fool you dote on.

Mrs. Lov. Those noisy fools, however you despise 'em, have good qualities which weigh more (or ought at least) with us women than all the pernicious wit you have to boast of.

Dor. That I may hereafter have a just value for their merit, pray, do me the favor to name 'em.

Mrs. Lov. You'll despise 'em as the dull effects of ignorance and vanity; yet I care not if I mention some. First, they really admire us, while you at best but flatter us well.

Dor. Take heed! Fools can dissemble, too——

Mrs. Lov. They may, but not so artificially as you. There is no fear they should deceive us! Then, they are assiduous, sir; they are ever offering us their service, and always waiting on our will.

Dor. You owe that to their excessive idleness. They know not how to entertain themselves at home, and find so little welcome abroad they are fain to fly to you who countenance 'em, as a refuge against solitude they would be otherwise condemned to.

Mrs. Lov. Their conversation, too, diverts us better.

Dor. Playing with your fan, smelling to your gloves, commending your hair, and taking notice how 'tis cut and shaded after the new way——

Mrs. Lov. Were it sillier than you can make it, you must allow 'tis pleasanter to laugh at others than to be laughed at ourselves, though never so wittily. Then, though they want skill to flatter us, they flatter themselves so well they save us the labor. We need not take that care and pains to satisfy 'em of our love, which we so often lose on you.

Dor. They commonly, indeed, believe too

well of themselves, and always better of you than you deserve.

Mrs. Lov. You are in the right. They have an implicit faith in us which keeps 'em from prying narrowly into our secrets and saves us from the vexatious trouble of clearing doubts which your subtle and causeless jealousies every moment raise.

Dor. There is an inbred falsehood in women, which inclines 'em still to them whom they may most easily deceive.

Mrs. Lov. The man who loves above his quality does not suffer more from the insolent impertinence of his mistress than the woman who loves above her understanding does from the arrogant presumptions of her friend.

Dor. You mistake the use of fools; they are designed for properties, and not for friends. You have an indifferent stock of reputation left yet. Lose it all like a frank gamester on the square; 'twill then be time enough to turn rook and cheat it up again on a good, substantial bubble.

Mrs. Lov. The old and the ill-favored are only fit for properties, indeed, but young and handsome fools have met with kinder fortunes.

Dor. They have—to the shame of your sex be it spoken! 'Twas this, the thought of this, made me by a timely jealousy endeavor to prevent the good fortune you are providing for Sir Fopling. But against a woman's frailty all our care is vain.

Mrs. Lov. Had I not with a dear experience bought the knowledge of your falsehood, you might have fooled me yet. This is not the first jealousy you have feigned, to make a quarrel with me, and get a week to throw away on some such unknown, inconsiderable slut as you have been lately lurking with at plays.

Dor. Women, when they would break off with a man, never want th' address to turn the fault on him.

Mrs. Lov. You take a pride of late in using me ill, that the town may know the power you have over me, which now (as unreasonably as yourself) expects that I (do me all the injuries you can) must love you still.

Dor. I am so far from expecting that you should, I begin to think you never did love me.

Mrs. Lov. Would the memory of it were so wholly worn out in me, that I did doubt it, too! What made you come to disturb my growing quiet?

Dor. To give you joy of your growing infamy.

Mrs. Lov. Insupportable! Insulting devil! This from you, the only author of my shame! This from another had been but justice; but from you, 'tis a hellish and inhuman outrage. What have I done?

Dor. A thing that puts you below my scorn, and makes my anger as ridiculous as you have made my love.

Mrs. Lov. I walked last night with Sir Fopling.

Dor. You did, madam; and you talked and laughed aloud, "Ha, ha, ha!"—Oh, that laugh! that laugh becomes the confidence of a woman of quality.

Mrs. Lov. You who have more pleasure in the ruin of a woman's reputation than in the endearments of her love, reproach me not with yourself, and I defy you to name the man who can lay a blemish on my fame.

Dor. To be seen publicly so transported with the vain follies of that notorious fop, to me is an infamy below the sin of prostitution with another man.

Mrs. Lov. Rail on! I am satisfied in the justice of what I did; you had provoked me to't.

Dor. What I did was the effect of passion, whose extravagancies you have been willing to forgive.

Mrs. Lov. And what I did was the effect of a passion you may forgive if you think fit.

Dor. Are you so indifferent grown?

Mrs. Lov. I am.

Dor. Nay, then 'tis time to part. I'll send you back your letters you have so often asked for. I have two or three of 'em about me.

Mrs. Lov. Give 'em me.

Dor. You snatch as if you thought I would not. There! and may the perjuries in 'em be mine if e'er I see you more!

[*Offers to go; she catches him.*

Mrs. Lov. Stay!

Dor. I will not.

Mrs. Lov. You shall.

Dor. What have you to say?

Mrs. Lov. I cannot speak it yet.

Dor. Something more in commendation of the fool?—Death, I want patience; let me go!

Mrs. Lov. I cannot. [*Aside*] I can sooner part with the limbs that hold him.—I hate that nauseous fool; you know I do.

Dor. Was it the scandal you were fond of then?

Mrs. Lov. You'd raised my anger equal to my love—a thing you ne'er could do before, and in revenge I did—I know not what I did. Would you would not think on't more!

Dor. Should I be willing to forget it, I shall be daily reminded of it; 'twill be a commonplace for all the town to laugh at me, and Medley, when he is rhetorically drunk, will ever be declaiming on it in my ears.

Mrs. Lov. 'Twill be believed a jealous spite. Come, forget it.

Dor. Let me consult my reputation; you are too careless of it. [*Pauses*] You shall meet Sir Fopling in the Mall again to-night.

Mrs. Lov. What mean you?

Dor. I have thought on it, and you must. 'Tis necessary to justify my love to the world. You can handle a coxcomb as he deserves when you are not out of humor, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Public satisfaction for the wrong I have done you? This is some new device to make me more ridiculous.

Dor. Hear me!

Mrs. Lov. I will not.

Dor. You will be persuaded.

Mrs. Lov. Never!

Dor. Are you so obstinate?

Mrs. Lov. Are you so base?

Dor. You will not satisfy my love?

Mrs. Lov. I would die to satisfy that; but I will not, to save you from a thousand racks, do a shameless thing to please your vanity.

Dor. Farewell, false woman!

Mrs. Lov. Do! go!

Dor. You will call me back again.

Mrs. Lov. Exquisite fiend, I knew you came but to torment me!

Enter BELLINDA *and* PERT.

Dor. [*surprised*]. Bellinda here!

Bel. [*aside*]. He starts and looks pale! The sight of me has touched his guilty soul.

Pert. 'Twas but a qualm, as I said—a little indigestion; the surfeit water did it, madam, mixed with a little *mirabilis*.

Dor. I am confounded, and cannot guess how she came hither!

Mrs. Lov. 'Tis your fortune, Bellinda, ever to be here when I am abused by this prodigy of ill-nature.

Bel. I am amazed to find him here. How has he the face to come near you?

Dor. [*aside*]. Here is fine work towards! I never was at such a loss before.

Bel. One who makes a public profession of breach of faith and gratitude—I loathe the sight of him.

Dor. There is no remedy; I must submit to their tongues now, and some other time bring myself off as well as I can.

Bel. Other men are wicked; but then, they have some sense of shame! He is never well but when he triumphs—nay, glories to a woman's face in his villainies.

Mrs. Lov. You are in the right, Bellinda, but methinks your kindness for me makes you concern yourself too much with him.

Bel. It does indeed, my dear. His barbarous carriage to you yesterday made me hope you ne'er would see him more, and the very next day to find him here again, provokes me strangely. But because I know you love him, I have done.

Dor. You have reproached me handsomely, and I deserve it for coming hither; but——

Pert. You must expect it, sir. All women will hate you for my lady's sake.

Dor. [*aside to* BELLINDA]. Nay, if she begins too, 'tis time to fly; I shall be scolded to death else.—I am to blame in some circumstances, I confess; but as to the main, I am not so guilty as you imagine. I shall seek a more convenient time to clear myself.

Mrs. Lov. Do it now. What impediments are here?

Dor. I want time, and you want temper.

Mrs. Lov. These are weak pretenses.

Dor. You were never more mistaken in your life; and so farewell.

[DORIMANT *flings off.*

Mrs. Lov. Call a footman, Pert, quickly; I will have him dogged.

Pert. I wish you would not, for my quiet and your own.

Mrs. Lov. I'll find out the infamous cause of all our quarrels, pluck her mask off, and expose her bare-faced to the world!

Bel. [*aside*]. Let me but escape this time, I'll never venture more.

Mrs. Lov. Bellinda, you shall go with me.

Bel. I have such a heaviness hangs on me with what I did this morning, I would fain go home and sleep, my dear.

Mrs. Lov. Death! and eternal darkness! I shall never sleep again. Raging fevers seize the world and make mankind as restless as I am! [*Exit* MRS. LOVEIT.

Bel. I knew him false and helped to make him so. Was not her ruin enough to fright me from the danger? It should have been, but love can take no warning.

[*Exit* BELLINDA.

SCENE II

LADY TOWNLEY'S *house.*

Enter MEDLEY, YOUNG BELLAIR, LADY TOWNLEY, EMILIA, *and* [SMIRK] *a Chaplain.*

Med. Bear up, Bellair, and do not let us see that repentance in thine we daily do in married faces.

Lady Town. This marriage will strangely surprise my brother when he knows it.

Med. Your nephew ought to conceal it for a time, madam. Since marriage has lost its good name, prudent men seldom expose their own reputations till 'tis convenient to justify their wives.

Old Bell. [*without*]. Where are you all there? Out! adod, will nobody hear?

Lady Town. My brother! Quickly, Mr. Smirk, into this closet; you must not be seen yet! [SMIRK *goes into the closet.*

Enter Old Bellair *and* Lady Townley's *Page.*

Old Bell. **Desire Mr. Forbes to walk into the lower parlor; I will be with him presently.** [*To* Young Bellair] **Where have you been, sir, you could not wait on me to-day?**

Young Bell. **About a business.**

Old Bell. **Are you so good at business? Adod, I have a business too, you shall dispatch out of hand, sir. Send for a parson, sister; my Lady Woodvil and her daughter are coming.**

Lady Town. **What need you huddle up things thus?**

Old Bell. **Out a pize! youth is apt to play the fool, and 'tis not good it should be in their power.**

Lady Town. **You need not fear your son.**

Old Bell. **H'has been idling this morning, and adod, I do not like him.** [*To* Emilia] **How dost thou do, sweetheart?**

Emil. **You are very severe, sir; married in such haste.**

Old Bell. **Go to, thou'rt a rogue, and I will talk with thee anon. Here my Lady Woodvil comes.**

Enter Lady Woodvil, Harriet, *and* Busy.

Welcome, madam; Mr. Forbes [is] below with the writings.

Lady Wood. **Let us down and make an end then.**

Old Bell. **Sister, show us the way.** [*To* Young Bell., *who is talking to* Harriet] **Harry, your business lies not there yet. Excuse him till we have done, lady, and then, adod, he shall be for thee. Mr. Medley, we must trouble you to be a witness.**

Med. **I luckily came for that purpose, sir.**

[*Exeunt* Old Bellair, Young Bellair, Lady Townley, *and* Lady Woodvil.

Busy. **What will you do, madam?**

Har. **Be carried back and mewed up in the country again, run away here, anything rather than be married to a man I do not care for! Dear Emilia, do thou advise me.**

Emil. **Mr. Bellair is engaged, you know.**

Har. **I do, but know not what the fear of losing an estate may fright him to.**

Emil. **In the desperate condition you are in, you should consult with some judicious man. What think you of Mr. Dorimant?**

Har. **I do not think of him at all.**

Busy. **She thinks of nothing else, I am sure.**

Emil. **How fond your mother was of Mr. Courtage!**

Har. **Because I contrived the mistake to make a little mirth, you believe I like the man.**

Emil. **Mr. Bellair believes you love him.**

Har. **Men are seldom in the right when they guess at a woman's mind. Would she whom he loves, loved him no better!**

Busy [*aside*]. **That's e'en well enough, on all conscience.**

Emil. **Mr. Dorimant has a great deal of wit.**

Har. **And takes a great deal of pains to show it.**

Emil. **He's extremely well fashioned.**

Har. **Affectedly grave, or ridiculously wild and apish.**

Busy. **You defend him still against your mother!**

Har. **I would not, were he justly rallied, but I cannot hear anyone undeservedly railed at.**

Emil. **Has your woman learned the song you were so taken with?**

Har. **I was fond of a new thing; 'tis dull at a second hearing.**

Emil. **Mr. Dorimant made it.**

Busy. **She knows it, madam, and has made me sing it at least a dozen times this morning.**

Har. **Thy tongue is as impertinent as thy fingers.**

Emil. **You have provoked her.**

Busy. **'Tis but singing the song and I shall appease her.**

Emil. **Prithee, do.**

Har. **She has a voice will grate your ears worse than a cat-call, and dresses so ill she's scarce fit to trick up a yeoman's daughter on a holiday.** [Busy *sings.*

Song by Sir C. S.

As Amoret with Phyllis sat,
One evening on the plain,
And saw the charming Strephon wait
To tell the nymph his pain;

The threat'ning danger to remove,
She whispered in her ear,
"Ah, Phyllis, if you would not love,
This shepherd do not hear!

"None ever had so strange an art,
His passion to convey
Into a list'ning virgin's heart,
And steal her soul away.

"Fly, fly betimes, for fear you give
Occasion for your fate."
"In vain," said she; "in vain I strive!
Alas, 'tis now too late."

Enter Dorimant.

Dor. Music so softens and disarms the mind——

Har. That not one arrow does resistance find.

Dor. **Let us make use of the lucky minute, then.**

Har. [*aside, turning from* Dorimant]. **My love springs with my blood into my face; I dare not look upon him yet.**

Dor. What have we here? the picture of celebrated beauty giving audience in public to a declared lover?

Har. Play the dying fop and make the piece complete, sir.

Dor. What think you if the hint were well improved? The whole mystery of making love pleasantly designed and wrought in a suit of hangings?

Har. 'Twere needless to execute fools in effigy who suffer daily in their own persons.

Dor. [*aside to* Emilia]. Mrs. Bride, for such I know this happy day has made you——

Emil. [*aside*]. Defer the formal joy you are to give me, and mind your business with her. [*Aloud*] Here are dreadful preparations, Mr. Dorimant—writings sealing, and a parson sent for.

Dor. To marry this lady?

Busy. Condemned she is, and what will become of her I know not, without you generously engage in a rescue.

Dor. In this sad condition, madam, I can do no less than offer you my service.

Har. The obligation is not great; you are the common sanctuary for all young women who run from their relations.

Dor. I have always my arms open to receive the distressed, but I will open my heart and receive you where none yet did ever enter. You have filled it with a secret; might I but let you know it——

Har. Do not speak it if you would have me believe it. Your tongue is so famed for falsehood, 'twill do the truth an injury.

[*Turns away her head.*

Dor. Turn not away, then, but look on me and guess it.

Har. Did you not tell me there was no credit to be given to faces?—that women nowadays have their passions as much at will as they have their complexions, and put on joy and sadness, scorn and kindness, with the same ease they do their paint and patches? Are they the only counterfeits?

Dor. You wrong your own while you suspect my eyes. By all the hope I have in you, the inimitable color in your cheeks is not more free from art than are the sighs I offer.

Har. In men who have been long hardened in sin, we have reason to mistrust the first signs of repentance.

Dor. The prospect of such a heaven will make me persevere and give you marks that are infallible.

Har. What are those?

Dor. I will renounce all the joy I have in friendship and in wine, sacrifice to you all the interest I have in other women——

Har. Hold! Though I wish you devout, I would not have you turn fanatic. Could you neglect these a while and make a journey into the country?

Dor. To be with you, I could live there and never send one thought to London.

Har. Whate'er you say, I know all beyond High Park 's a desert to you, and that no gallantry can draw you farther.

Dor. That has been the utmost limit of my love; but now my passion knows no bounds, and there's no measure to be taken of what I'll do for you from anything I ever did before.

Har. When I hear you talk thus in Hampshire, I shall begin to think there may be some little truth enlarged upon.

Dor. Is this all?—Will you not promise me?

Har. I hate to promise; what we do then is expected of us and wants much of the welcome it finds when it surprises.

Dor. May I not hope?

Har. That depends on you and not on me, and 'tis to no purpose to forbid it.

[*Turns to* Busy.

Busy. Faith, madam, now I perceive the gentleman loves you, too, e'en let him know your mind and torment yourselves no longer.

Har. Dost think I have no sense of modesty?

Busy. Think, if you lose this you may never have another opportunity.

Har. May he hate me (a curse that frightens me when I speak it), if ever I do a thing against the rules of decency and honor.

Dor. [*to* Emilia]. I am beholding to you for your good intentions, madam.

Emil. I thought the concealing of our marriage from her might have done you better service.

Dor. Try her again.

Emil. What are you resolved, madam? The time draws near.

Har. To be obstinate and protest against this marriage.

Enter Lady Townley *in haste.*

Lady Town. [*to* Emilia]. Quickly! quickly! let Mr. Smirk out of the closet.

[Smirk *comes out.*

Har. A parson! Had you laid him in here?

Dor. I knew nothing of him.

Har. Should it appear you did, your opinion of my uneasiness may cost you dear.

Enter Old Bellair, Young Bellair, Medley, *and* Lady Woodvil.

Old Bell. Out a pize! the canonical hour is almost past. Sister, is the man of God come?

Lady Town. He waits your leisure.

Old Bell. [*to* Smirk]. By your favor, sir.—Adod, a pretty spruce fellow! What may we call him?

Lady Town. Mr. Smirk—my Lady Bigot's chaplain.

Old Bell. A wise woman; adod, she is. The man will serve for the flesh as well as the spirit. [*To* Smirk] Please you, sir, to commission a young couple to go to bed together a-God's name.—Harry!

Young Bell. Here, sir.

Old Bell. Out a pize! Without your mistress in your hand!

Smirk. Is this the gentleman?

Old Bell. Yes, sir.

Smirk. Are you not mistaken, sir?

Old Bell. Adod, I think not, sir.

Smirk. Sure, you are, sir?

Old Bell. You look as if you would forbid the banns, Mr. Smirk. I hope you have no pretension to the lady?

Smirk. Wish him joy, sir; I have done the good office to-day already.

Old Bell. Out a pize! What do I hear!

Lady Town. Never storm, brother; the truth is out.

Old Bell. How say you, sir? Is this your wedding day?

Young Bell. It is, sir.

Old Bell. And adod, it shall be mine too. [*To* Emilia] Give me your hand, sweetheart. —What dost thou mean? Give me thy hand, I say.

[Emilia *kneels and* Young Bellair.

Lady Town. Come, come! give her your blessing. This is the woman your son loved and is married to.

Old Bell. Ha! cheated! cozened! and by your contrivance, sister!

Lady Town. What would you do with her? She's a rogue and you can't abide her.

Med. Shall I hit her a pat for you, sir?

Old Bell. Adod, you are all rogues, and I never will forgive you.

Lady Town. Whither? Whither away?

Med. Let him go and cool awhile.

Lady Wood. [*to* Dorimant]. Here's a business broke out now, Mr. Courtage; I am made a fine fool of.

Dor. You see the old gentleman knew nothing of it.

Lady Wood. I find he did not. I shall have some trick put upon me if I stay in this wicked town any longer.—Harriet! Dear child, where art thou? I'll into the country straight.

Old Bell. Adod, madam, you shall hear me first.

Enter Mrs. Loveit *and* Bellinda.

Mrs. Lov. Hither my man dogged him.

Bel. Yonder he stands, my dear.

Mrs. Lov. [*aside*]. I see him, and with him the face that has undone me. Oh, that I were but where I might throw out the anguish of my heart! Here, it must rage within and break it.

Lady Town. Mrs. Loveit! Are you afraid to come forward?

Mrs. Lov. I was amazed to see so much company here in the morning. The occasion sure is extraordinary.

Dor. [*aside*]. Loveit and Bellinda! The devil owes me a shame to-day and I think never will have done paying it.

Mrs. Lov. Married, dear Emilia? How am I transported with the news!

Har. [*to* Dorimant]. I little thought Emilia was the woman Mr. Bellair was in love with. I'll chide her for not trusting me with the secret.

Dor. How do you like Mrs. Loveit?

Har. She's a famed mistress of yours, I hear.

Dor. She has been on occasion.

Old Bell. [*to* Lady Woodvil]. Adod, madam, I cannot help it.

Lady Wood. You need make no more apologies, sir.

Emil. [*to* Mrs. Loveit]. The old gentleman's excusing himself to my Lady Woodvil.

Mrs. Lov. Ha, ha, ha! I never heard of anything so pleasant!

Har. [*to* Dorimant]. She's extremely overjoyed at something.

Dor. At nothing. She is one of those hoiting ladies who gaily fling themselves about and force a laugh when their aching hearts are full of discontent and malice.

Mrs. Lov. O Heaven! I was never so near killing myself with laughing.—Mr. Dorimant, are you a brideman?

Lady Wood. Mr. Dorimant!—Is this Mr. Dorimant, madam?

Mrs. Lov. If you doubt it, your daughter can resolve you, I suppose.

Lady Wood. I am cheated too—basely cheated!

Old Bell. Out a pize! what's here? More knavery yet?

Lady Wood. Harriet! On my blessing, come away, I charge you!

Har. Dear mother, do but stay and hear me.

Lady Wood. I am betrayed and thou art undone, I fear.

Har. Do not fear it; I have not, nor never will, do anything against my duty. Believe me, dear mother—do!

Dor. [*to* Mrs. Loveit]. I had trusted you with this secret but that I knew the violence of your nature would ruin my fortune—as now unluckily it has. I thank you, madam.

Mrs. Lov. She's an heiress, I know, and very rich.

Dor. To satisfy you, I must give up my interest wholly to my love. Had you been a reasonable woman, I might have secured 'em both and been happy.

Mrs. Lov. You might have trusted me with anything of this kind—you know you

might. Why did you go under a wrong name?

Dor. The story is too long to tell you now. Be satisfied, this is the business; this is the mask has kept me from you.

Bel. [*aside*]. He's tender of my honor though he's cruel to my love.

Mrs. Lov. Was it no idle mistress, then?

Dor. Believe me, a wife to repair the ruins of my estate that needs it.

Mrs. Lov. The knowledge of this makes my grief hang lighter on my soul, but I shall never more be happy.

Dor. Bellinda!

Bel. Do not think of clearing yourself with me; it is impossible. Do all men break their words thus?

Dor. Th' extravagant words they speak in love. 'Tis as unreasonable to expect we should perform all we promised then, as to do all we threaten when we are angry. When I see you next——

Bel. Take no notice of me, and I shall not hate you.

Dor. How came you to Mrs. Loveit?

Bel. By a mistake the chairmen made, for want of my giving them directions.

Dor. 'Twas a pleasant one. We must meet again.

Bel. Never!

Dor. Never?

Bel. When we do, may I be as infamous as you are false.

Lady Town. Men of Mr. Dorimant's character always suffer in the general opinion of the world.

Med. You can make no judgment of a witty man from the common fame, considering the prevailing faction, madam.

Old Bell. Adod, he's in the right.

Med. Besides, 'tis a common error among women to believe too well of them they know, and too ill of them they don't.

Old Bell. Adod, he observes well.

Lady Town. Believe me, madam, you will find Mr. Dorimant as civil a gentleman as you thought Mr. Courtage.

Har. If you would but know him better——

Lady Wood. You have a mind to know him better? Come away! You shall never see him more.

Har. Dear mother, stay!

Lady Wood. I won't be consenting to your ruin.

Har. Were my fortune in your power——

Lady Wood. Your person is.

Har. Could I be disobedient, I might take it out of yours and put it into his.

Lady Wood. 'Tis that you would be at? You would marry this Dorimant?

Har. I cannot deny it; I would, and never will marry any other man.

Lady Wood. Is this the duty that you promised?

Har. But I will never marry him against your will.

Lady Wood. [*aside*]. She knows the way to melt my heart. [*Aloud*] Upon yourself light your undoing!

Med. [*to* Old Bellair]. Come, sir, you have not the heart any longer to refuse your blessing.

Old Bell. Adod, I ha' not.—Rise, and God bless you both! Make much of her, Harry; she deserves thy kindness. [*To* Emilia] Adod, sirrah, I did not think it had been in thee!

Enter Sir Fopling *and his Page.*

Sir Fop. 'Tis a damned windy day. Hey, page, is my periwig right?

Page. A little out of order, sir.

Sir Fop. Pox o' this apartment! It wants an antechamber to adjust oneself in. [*To* Mrs. Loveit] Madam, I came from your house, and your servants directed me hither.

Mrs. Lov. I shall give order hereafter they shall direct you better.

Sir Fop. The great satisfaction I had in the Mall last night has given me much disquiet since.

Mrs. Lov. 'Tis likely to give me more than I desire.

Sir Fop. What the devil makes her so reserved?—Am I guilty of an indiscretion, madam?

Mrs. Lov. You will be of a great one, if you continue your mistake, sir.

Sir Fop. Something's put you out of humor?

Mrs. Lov. The most foolish, inconsiderable thing that ever did.

Sir Fop. Is it in my power?

Mrs. Lov. —To hang or drown it. Do one of 'em and trouble me no more.

Sir Fop. So *fieré? Serviteur, madam.*—Medley, where's Dorimant?

Med. Methinks the lady has not made you those advances to-day she did last night, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. Prithee, do not talk of her!

Med. She would be a *bonne fortune.*

Sir Fop. Not to me at present.

Med. How so?

Sir Fop. An intrigue now would be but a temptation to me to throw away that vigor on which I mean I shall shortly make my court to the whole sex in a ballet.

Med. Wisely considered, Sir Fopling.

Sir Fop. No one woman is worth the loss of a cut in a caper.

Med. Not when 'tis so universally designed.

Lady Wood. Mr. Dorimant, everyone has spoke so much in your behalf that I can no longer doubt but I was in the wrong.

Mrs. Lov. There's nothing but falsehood and impertinence in this world! All men are

villains or fools; take example from my misfortunes, Bellinda; if thou wouldst be happy, give thyself wholly up to goodness.

Har. [*to* MRS. LOVEIT]. Mr. Dorimant has been your God Almighty long enough; 'tis time to think of another.

Mrs. Lov. Jeered by her!—I will lock myself up in my house and never see the world again.

Har. A nunnery is the more fashionable place for such a retreat, and has been the fatal consequence of many a *belle passion.*

Mrs. Lov. Hold, heart, till I get home! Should I answer, 'twould make her triumph greater. [*Is going out.*

Dor. Your hand, Sir Fopling——

Sir Fop. Shall I wait upon you, madam?

Mrs. Lov. Legion of fools, as many devils take thee! [*Exit* MRS. LOVEIT.

Med. Dorimant, I pronounce thy reputation clear; and henceforward when I would know anything of woman, I will consult no other oracle.

Sir Fop. Stark mad, by all that's handsome! Dorimant, thou hast engaged me in a pretty business.

Dor. I have not leisure now to talk about it.

Old Bell. Out a pize! what does this man of mode do here again?

Lady Town. He'll be an excellent entertainment within, brother, and is luckily come to raise the mirth of the company.

Lady Wood. Madam, I take my leave of you.

Lady Town. What do you mean, madam?

Lady Wood. To go this afternoon part of my way to Hartley——

Old Bell. Adod, you shall stay and dine first! Come, we will all be good friends, and you shall give Mr. Dorimant leave to wait upon you and your daughter in the country.

Lady Wood. If his occasions bring him that way, I have now so good an opinion of him, he shall be welcome.

Har. To a great rambling, lone house that looks as if it were not inhabited, the family's so small. There you'll find my mother, an old lame aunt, and myself, sir, perched up on chairs at a distance in a great parlor, sitting moping like three or four melancholy birds in a spacious volery. Does not this stagger your resolution?

Dor. Not at all, madam. The first time I saw you you left me with the pangs of love upon me, and this day my soul has quite given up her liberty.

Har. This is more dismal than the country! Emilia, pity me, who am going to that sad place. Methinks I hear the hateful noise of rooks already—*Kaw, kaw, kaw!* There's music in the worst cry in London, "My dill and cowcumbers to pickle!"

Old Bell. Sister, knowing of this matter, I hope you have provided us some good cheer.

Lady Town. I have, brother, and the fiddles, too.

Old Bell. Let 'em strike up, then; the young lady shall have a dance before she departs. [*Dance.*

[*After the dance*]—So! Now we'll in and make this an arrant wedding-day.

[*To the pit.*

And if these honest gentlemen rejoice,
Adod, the boy has made a happy choice.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE

BY MR. DRYDEN.

Most modern wits such monstrous fools have shown,
They seem'd not of heav'n's making, but their own.
Those nauseous harlequins in farce may pass,
But there goes more to a substantial ass.
Something of man must be exposed to view
That, gallants, they may more resemble you.
Sir Fopling is a fool so nicely writ,
The ladies would mistake him for a wit;
And when he sings, talks loud, and cocks, would cry,
"I vow, methinks he's pretty company!"
So brisk, so gay, so travelled, so refined
As he, took pains to graft upon his kind.
True fops help nature's work and go to school,
To file and finish God A'mighty's fool.
Yet none Sir Fopling him, or him, can call;
He's knight o'th' shire, and represents ye all.
From each he meets, he culls whate'er he can;
Legion's his name, a people in a man.
His bulky folly gathers as it goes
And, rolling o'er you, like a snowball grows.
His various modes, from various fathers follow;
One taught the toss, and one the new French wallow.
His sword-knot, this; his cravat, this, designed;
And this, the yard-long snake he twirls behind.
From one the sacred periwig he gained,
Which wind ne'er blew, nor touch of hat prophaned.
Another's diving bow he did adore,
Which with a shog casts all his hair before
Till he with full decorum brings it back,
And rises with a water spaniel's shake.
As for his songs (the ladies' dear delight),
Those sure he took from most of you who write.
Yet every man is safe from what he feared,
For no one fool is hunted from the herd.

THOMAS OTWAY

VENICE PRESERVED

VERY striking is the contrast between the first Restoration tragedian and the second, between Dryden and Otway: the one boasting no great work in his youth and only "faintly distinguished in his thirtieth year"; the other, among the unhappy youths of literature whose knell was knolled before they had reached the middle of the way. The energy, versatility, and breadth of view of the poet who could do all things better than another seem worlds above his younger contemporary's narrow intensity.

The life of Thomas Otway begins in gladness. A country clergyman's son, born in a Sussex parish on March 3, 1652, he is educated at Winchester, which long hallows his memory, and then, as a gentleman commoner in the company of gilded youth at Christ Church, Oxford. His comeliness and charm win him many friends, who are rather a curse than a blessing, and his love of pleasure leads him, always feeble of purpose, into wild ways in London when his college days are over. He fails as an actor, stagestruck in his only attempt, and whistles other chances in life down the wind. There is soon no money in his purse, for his father has left him "nought but his loyalty." He turns playwright, receiving hearty greetings at the Duke's Theatre, now dominated by that best of actor-managers before Garrick, Thomas Betterton. The heroic play is near the end of its vogue, and Otway's first tragedy, *Alcibiades* (1675), is one of the dullest of that barren sort; but it is piloted to undeserved success by the talents of Betterton, his wife, and Mrs. Barry in the chief rôles. Other dramas follow in quick succession. In the next year (1676) the rimed *Don Carlos* wins as high favor from Restoration audiences as from many modern critics. In 1677 adaptations of Racine and Molière, floated by Betterton and Barry, gain applause and long hold the stage. An appalling lack of humor does not restrain Otway from comedy, and the rubbishy *Friendship in Fashion*, "full of nauseous doings," closes his first period in 1678 with a cheaply won triumph.

Externally all seems well with the man, but the demon of frenzied love for that frail beauty, Mrs. Barry, who smiles upon his rival, the outrageous Earl of Rochester, grants the distracted wretch no mercy. To escape his tyrant—so he addresses the actress in the first of six despairing epistles—this creature of impulse snatches at a commission in the army and hurries

off on an ill-fated campaign in the Low Countries. At the end of 1679 he comes creeping back, a sorry figure at which scoffers point, but with fresh resources of head and heart. His first gift to the stage is the great tragedy of *The Orphan* (1680), displaying the tragic mistakes of a night and affording his tyrant large scope for her splendid art in the interpretation of the wronged Monimia, over whose character, says Mr. Gosse, "probably more tears have been shed than over that of any other stage heroine." His next things are poor enough: the unhappy transference of *Romeo and Juliet* to an ancient Roman background in *The History and Fall of Caius Marius* (1680), and the comedy of highly flavored personal reminiscence, *The Soldier's Fortune* (1681). Then in 1682 Otway reaches his high-water mark in the play which is our chief concern, *Venice Preserved*—to some "the best tragedy out of Shakspere," to others "the greatest tragic drama between Shakspere and Shelley."

Otway's ending rivals in wretchedness that of any of his ill-starred heroes. Seven years' service for his Rachel had been all in vain. The little money gained from his plays had been quickly squandered. *The Atheist,* a sequel to his military comedy, had miserably failed in 1684. Apparently, it was not "enough for one age to have neglected Mr. Cowley and to have starved Mr. Butler." However conflicting the accounts of Otway's death, a tradition of days of debauch, sponging-houses, and semi-starvation places him, too, among "mighty poets in their misery dead." At the age of thirty-three, a little older than Marlowe and Shelley, a little younger than Burns and Byron, he was laid to rest on April 16, 1685, in the churchyard of St. Clement Danes.

The source of Otway's *Venice Preserved* was an historical novel, *Conjuration des Espagnols contre la Venise en 1618* by the same author that had, in another work, furnished the dramatist with the theme of *Don Carlos,* the Abbé Saint-Réal. This inner history of a famous conspiracy, which was doubtless known to Otway in an English translation of 1675, now provided him not only with an admirably effective situation, but with such eminently dramatic characters as Jaffeir and Pierre. Then, too, as has been often suggested, this story of a plot might well be fashioned by a Tory of 1682 into a covert allegory of the great "Popish Plot," fresh in all Englishmen's minds, and might thus, through obvious implications, awaken as ready a response from partisans as Dryden's timely political satires of similar significance. That Otway availed himself of this opportunity to the full is seen not only in the indirect assault of prologue and epilogue upon the Whig leader, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, but in the beastly caricature of that statesman, the thinly disguised Antonio of the unfortunate sub-plot, who possesses no vestige of the virtues of even Dryden's Achitophel. These disgusting scenes, defended by Taine alone on the score of relief to the serious action, repel both by their grossness and their lack-wit and were wisely barred from later stage-versions of the play.

Of the two notable figures of *Venice Preserved,* one was well found,

the other well invented. By a happy coincidence Saint-Réal's story offered just that type of hero which Otway could best portray, which indeed he had already so clearly bodied forth both in the Prince of *Don Carlos* and in Castalio of *The Orphan,* and which he saw mirrored whenever he looked into his own heart. "Nature is there," said Dryden finely of *Venice Preserved,* and, with Jaffeir in mind, he might have added, "Otway's nature." The intense sensibility of Saint-Réal's unhappy conspirator that dwells upon "the cries of children trodden under feet, the groans of old men murdered, and the shrieks of women dishonored, palaces falling, temples on fire, and holy places covered with blood" blends with a weakness of will that this way and that divides the mind in an ecstasy of torture. The irresponsible impressionable youth, half-crazed by passionate affection and enslaved by romantic impulses, was a stranger to the conventional "heroic" drama, but was no stranger to the little circle of actors at the Duke's Theatre, observers of the infatuation that wrecked Otway's life. But neither to tragic fiction nor to his tragic experience was the dramatist indebted for that most triumphant of all his creations, the exquisite Belvidera. It is true that this sensitive figure is of the sisterhood of the Queen in *Don Carlos* and Monimia in *The Orphan,* for Otway may be charged not unjustly with drawing but one man and one woman; but in the blending of tenderness and tragic power, she rises far above these other selves into the lofty company of those supreme in suffering, Desdemona, the Duchess of Malfi, and Beatrice Cenci. From the moment when she comes weeping forth, "shining through tears like April suns in showers," she is all compact of brightness and sweetness, purity and truth, unshaken dignity and unfaltering love. If she does not release with her own hands all the raging winds of passion that shake the hearts and souls of these Venetians, she seems the centre of every whirling storm of grief and anger. It is indeed her situation that, often without her knowledge and desire, gives impulse to action. Her rejection by her father reduces the husband, whose lust of revenge she vainly seeks to allay in a scene unrivalled for clinging devotion, to a desperate abandonment which is quick to welcome Pierre's fatal suggestion. Again she stands in pathetic futility without help or hope between the ill-starred Jaffeir and the friend whose ruin he has effected. Once, however, she touches wittingly all the springs of action in that splendid appeal to Jaffeir which awakens his susceptibility to the mixed motives of personal revenge upon the old lecher and imaginative sympathy with the innocent victims of impending doom. Thus it is she who preserves Venice. Her touching intercession with her father wins the old senator to her side and seems to check the final catastrophe—but only for a moment. In the last scene, so steeped in the drowsiness of woe, her shattered sense and breaking heart succumb to fearful visions, and Belvidera perishes amid the pitiful wreckage. To the irresolute Jaffeir there could be no better antitype than the intrepid Pierre with his steadfastness of purpose and unshrinking loyalty to honor even when rooted in dis-

honor—a gallant specimen of that militant sort which views life as a straight line. To the gravity of Belvidera, the levity of Aquilina, laughing-eyed and open-armed, might serve as a like foil, if the comic scenes in which the courtesan appears were not degraded by buffoonery into wretched excrescences upon the guiding motives of dramatic action.

This leads us to a brief consideration of the plot, so varied in its movement, so intense in its interest. Hazlitt with true discernment finds both charm and power in "the awful suspense of the situations, the conflict of duty and passions, the intimate bonds that unite the characters together and that are violently rent asunder like the parting of soul and body, the solemn march of the tragical events to the fatal catastrophe that winds up and closes over all." Though the drama strictly regards classical limitations of time and place—one critical day in Venice—the action is attended by many romantic accessories: wealth of actors and of incidents, low buffoonery designed perhaps as relief, the visible horrors of on-stage deaths, the heroine's madness, and the two ghostly apparitions. The tolling of the bell in the fifth act has been likened, in "its genuine melodramatic thrill," to the trumpet in the lists of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and to the horn of Hernani. Otway was too close a student of Elizabethan language and stage-effects to stand with the classicists. Moreover, artificial rules and conventional traditions impose few fetters upon a master of passion swaying it to his needs. Organic harmony and emotional intensity (Noel) are here sovereign traits.

Otway has been charged with small attention to local color. But in this tragedy the background is far more clearly defined than in Shakspere's plays of Venice. Mention of the Rialto, St. Mark's, the Ducal Palace, and "the Adriatic wedded by our Duke" gives the requisite sense of locality. What is much more to the purpose, the seventeenth century imagination, alive to every hint of Spanish intrigue and Venetian mystery, must have responded quickly to the spirited portrayal of the brewing of conspiracy and of the corruption and decay of the great Republic. For much of this atmosphere Otway was indebted to Saint-Réal, who had not a little of the artist in him; but the dramatist everywhere displays a full sense of the literary values of historical associations and popular conceptions. Otway's art has stamped the image of Venice on others than on Byron.

The style of the play is simple—how simple and restrained anyone will recognize who compares it with the fret and fury of heroic drama. But Otway's effortless simplicity never thins to meagreness, nor does his reserve ever congeal to icy formality. If his lines lack the sonorous energy of Dryden's full tones in *All for Love*, they possess a nervous strength begotten by the union of specific, almost Saxon, diction with uninvolved sentence-structure. He is often monosyllabic for many lines together; and he achieves a compactness of phrase admirably adapted to passionate utterance. Though there are in Otway few or no lines that flash upon the inward eye with penetrating truth and wisdom universal in its application, there is every-

where transparent lucidity of expression. There is little glamor in him, but his imagery is apt, unlabored, natural, and familiar. The full ear of corn, the snare of the fowler, owls with heavy wings, the tender infant in its cradle, the beggar brat under a hedge, the grumbling of the winds, wrecks in the rough tide—these are his effective similes. Otway's blank verse, like that of Dryden and other contemporaries who first wrought in rime, confesses the influence of the heroic couplet; hence we must not look here for that unchecked flow of thought from line to line, that rapturous harmony of meaning and measure, of which the Elizabethans knew the secret. This is a self-contained metre, incapable perhaps of flexible rhythm and haunting melodies, but responsive in its latent vigor to the vehement demands of passionate action.

"There was a time when Otway charmed the stage." And the time was of long duration. For over a hundred and fifty years from its successful presentation early in 1682, *Venice Preserved* held English audiences, and in many adaptations and translations pleased the Continent. Indeed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it seems to have been acted more frequently than any play outside of Shakspere. English stage history records no less than twenty-one revivals before 1845. And the greatest actors have filled the leading rôles: Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Seymour, Mrs. Siddons, Miss O'Neill, and Mrs. Warner appearing as Belvidera; and Betterton, Quin, Garrick, Kemble, Macready, Young, and Phelps as Jaffeir or Pierre.

VENICE PRESERVED

OR

A PLOT DISCOVERED

PROLOGUE

In these distracted times, when each man dreads
The bloody stratagems of busy heads;
When we have feared three years we know not what,
Till witnesses began to die o' th' rot,
What made our poet meddle with a plot?
Was't that he fancied, for the very sake
And name of plot, his trifling play might take?
For there's not in't one inch-board evidence,
But 'tis, he says, to reason plain and sense,
And that he thinks a plausible defence.

Were truth by sense and reason to be tried,
Sure all our swearers might be laid aside:
No, of such tools our author has no need,
To make his plot, or make his play succeed;
He, of black bills, has no prodigious tales,
Or Spanish pilgrims cast ashore in Wales;
Here's not one murthered magistrate at least,
Kept rank like ven'son for a city feast,
Grown four days stiff, the better to prepare
And fit his pliant limbs to ride in chair:
Yet here's an army raised, though under ground,
But no man seen, nor one commission found;
Here is a traitor too, that's very old,
Turbulent, subtle, mischievous, and bold,
Bloody, revengeful, and to crown his part,
Loves fumbling with a wench, with all his heart;
Till after having many changes passed,
In spite of age (thanks Heaven) is hanged at last:
Next is a senator that keeps a whore,
In Venice none a higher office bore;
To lewdness every night the lecher ran,
Show me, all London, such another man,
Match him at Mother Creswold's if you can.
O Poland, Poland! had it been thy lot,
T' have heard in time of this Venetian plot,
Thou surely chosen hadst one king from thence,
And honored them, as thou hast England since.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUKE OF VENICE.
PRIULI, *Father to Belvidera, a Senator.*
ANTONIO, *a Fine Speaker in the Senate.*
JAFFEIR,
PIERRE,
RENAULT,
BEDAMAR,
SFINOSA,
THEODORE,
ELIOT,
REVILLIDO,
DURAND,
MEZZANA,
BRAINVEIL,
TERNON,
BRABE,
RETROSI,
Conspirators.

BELVIDERA.
AQUILINA.

Two Women, Attendants on Belvidera.
Two Women, Servants to Aquilina.
The Council of Ten.
Officer.
Guards.
Friar.
Executioner and Rabble.

SCENE.—VENICE.

ACT I

Scene I

Enter Priuli *and* Jaffeir.

Priu. No more! I'll hear no more; begone and leave.
Jaff. Not hear me! by my sufferings but you shall!
My lord, my lord! I'm not that abject wretch
You think me: patience! where's the distance throws
Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear me!
Priu. Have you not wronged me?
Jaff. Could my nature e'er
Have brooked injustice or the doing wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myself
To gain a hearing from a cruel father!
Wronged you?
Priu. Yes! wronged me, in the nicest point:
The honor of my house; you have done me wrong;
You may remember (for I now will speak,
And urge its baseness): when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes, as made you looked on
By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation;
Pleased with your growing virtue, I received you:
Courted, and sought to raise you to your merits:
My house, my table, nay my fortune too,
My very self, was yours; you might have used me
To your best service; like an open friend,
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine;
When in requital of my best endeavors,
You treacherously practised to undo me,
Seduced the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom:
O Belvidera!
Jaff. 'Tis to me you owe her,
Childless you had been else, and in the grave,
Your name extinct, nor no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,
Since in your brigandine you sailed to see
The Adriatic wedded by our Duke,
And I was with you: your unskilful pilot
Dashed us upon a rock; when to your boat
You made for safety; entered first yourself;
The affrighted Belvidera following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel side,
Was by a wave washed off into the deep,
When instantly I plunged into the sea,
And buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Redeemed her life with half the loss of mine;
Like a rich conquest in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dashed the saucy waves,
That thronged and pressed to rob me of my prize:
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms:
Indeed you thanked me; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul: for from that hour she loved me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.
Priu. You stole her from me; like a thief you stole her,
At dead of night; that cursed hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false like mine:
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both; continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous: still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress, and grind you; till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion.
Jaff. Half of your curse you have bestowed in vain;
Heaven has already crowned our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty.
May he live to prove more gentle than his grandsire,
And happier than his father!
Priu. Rather live
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries; whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.
Jaff. You talk as if 'twould please you.
Priu. 'Twould, by Heaven.
Once she was dear indeed; the drops that fell
From my sad heart, when she forgot her duty,
The fountain of my life was not so precious:
But she is gone, and if I am a man
I will forget her.
Jaff. Would I were in my grave!
Priu. And she too with thee;
For, living here, you're but my curst remembrancers
I once was happy.
Jaff. You use me thus, because you know my soul
Is fond of Belvidera: you perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me;

Oh! could my soul ever have known satiety,
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me,
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder!

Priu. You dare not do't——

Jaff. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.
My heart that awes me is too much my master:
Three years are past since first our vows were plighted,
During which time, the world must bear me witness,
I have treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice;
Distinction, place, attendance and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded;
Out of my little fortune I have done this;
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see, I loved her for herself,
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli——

Priu. No more!

Jaff. Yes! all, and then adieu for ever.
There's not a wretch that lives on common charity
But's happier than me: for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never waked but to a joyful morning;
Yet now must fall like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom scaped, yet's withered in the ripening.

Priu. Home and be humble, study to retrench;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly,
Reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state;
Then to some suburb cottage both retire;
Drudge, to feed loathsome life: get brats, and starve—
Home, home, I say.—— [*Exit* PRIULI.

Jaff. Yes, if my heart would let me—
This proud, this swelling heart: home I would go,
But that my doors are hateful to my eyes,
Filled and dammed up with gaping creditors.
Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring;
I have now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleased with ruin.
O Belvidera! oh, she is my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

Pierr. My friend, good morrow!
How fares the honest partner of my heart?
What, melancholy! not a word to spare me?

Jaff. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damned starving quality,
Called honesty, got footing in the world.

Pierr. Why, powerful villainy first set it up,
For its own ease and safety: honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other; lawyers would want practice,
Cut-throats rewards; each man would kill his brother
Himself, none would be paid or hanged for murder.
Honesty was a cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontrolled above their betters.

Jaff. Then honesty is but a notion.

Pierr. Nothing else,
Like wit, much talked of, not to be defined:
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't;
'Tis a ragged virtue: honesty! no more on't.

Jaff. Sure thou art honest?

Pierr. So indeed men think me;
But they're mistaken, Jaffeir: I am a rogue
As well as they;
A fine gay bold-faced villain, as thou seest me;
'Tis true, I pay my debts when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed; I'd not betray my friend,
To get his place or fortune: I scorn to flatter
A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch beneath me,
Yet, Jaffeir, for all this, I am a villain!

Jaff. A villain——

Pierr. Yes, a most notorious villain:
To see the suff'rings of my fellow-creatures,
And own myself a man: to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a show
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of;
They say, by them our hands are free from fetters,
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;
Drive us like wracks down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction;
All that bear this are villains; and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,

That makes us slaves and tells us 'tis our charter.
Jaff. O Aquilina! friend, to lose such beauty,
The dearest purchase of thy noble labors;
She was thy right by conquest, as by love.
Pierr. O Jaffeir! I'd so fixed my heart upon her,
That wheresoe'er I framed a scheme of life
For time to come, she was my only joy
With which I wished to sweeten future cares;
I fancied pleasures, none but one that loves
And dotes as I did can imagine like 'em:
When in the extremity of all these hopes,
In the most charming hour of expectation,
Then when our eager wishes soar the highest,
Ready to stoop and grasp the lovely game,
A haggard owl, a worthless kite of prey,
With his foul wings sailed in and spoiled my quarry.
Jaff. I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou hat'st him.
Pierr. Curse on the common good that's so protected,
Where every slave that heaps up wealth enough
To do much wrong, becomes a lord of right!
I, who believed no ill could e'er come near me,
Found in the embraces of my Aquilina
A wretched, old but itching senator;
A wealthy fool, that had bought out my title,
A rogue, that uses beauty like a lambskin,
Barely to keep him warm: that filthy cuckoo too
Was in my absence crept into my nest,
And spoiling all my brood of noble pleasure.
Jaff. Didst thou not chase him thence?
Pierr. I did; and drove
The rank old bearded Hirco stinking home:
The matter was complained of in the Senate,
I summoned to appear, and censured basely,
For violating something they call *privilege*—
This was the recompense of [all] my service:
Would I'd been rather beaten by a coward!
A soldier's mistress, Jaffeir, 's his religion,
When that's profaned, all other ties are broken;
That even dissolves all former bonds of service,
And from that hour I think myself as free
To be the foe as e'er the friend of Venice.—
Nay, dear Revenge, whene'er thou call'st I'm ready.
Jaff. I think no safety can be here for virtue,
And grieve, my friend, as much as thou to live
In such a wretched state as this of Venice;
Where all agree to spoil the public good,
And villains fatten with the brave man's labors.
Pierr. We have neither safety, unity, nor peace,
For the foundation's lost of common good;
Justice is lame as well as blind amongst us;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That every day starts up to enslave us deeper:
Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
To do it right! O Jaffeir! then might'st thou
Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face,
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak! But my heart bleeds this moment!
Jaff. Curst be the cause, though I thy friend be part on't:
Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am used to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten 't to thy spirit.
Pierr. Too soon it will reach thy knowledge——
Jaff. Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.
Pierr. Then thou art ruined!
Jaff. That I long since knew,
I and ill-fortune have been long acquaintance.
Pierr. I passed this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying:
They told me, by the sentence of the law
They had commission to seize all thy fortune,
Nay more, Priuli's cruel hand hath signed it.
Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale:
There was another making villainous jests
At thy undoing; he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings, intermixed and wrought with gold;
The very bed, which on thy wedding-night
Received thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.
Jaff. Now, thank Heaven——
Pierr. Thank Heaven! for what?
Jaff. That I am not worth a ducat.

Pierr. Curse thy dull stars, and the worst fate of Venice,
Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;
Where there's no trust, no truth; where innocence
Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch
That's doomed to banishment, came weeping forth,
Shining through tears, like April suns in showers
That labor to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em,
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she leaned,
Kindly looked up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catched the sorrows that fell from her!
Even the lewd rabble that were gathered round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;
Governed their roaring throats and grumbled pity:
I could have hugged the greasy rogues; they pleased me.
Jaff. I thank thee for this story, from my soul,
Since now I know the worst that can befall me:
Ah, Pierre! I have a heart, that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me;
But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,
I own myself a coward: bear my weakness,
If throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.
Oh! I shall drown thee with my sorrows!
Pierr. Burn!
First burn, and level Venice to thy ruin.
What! starve like beggars' brats in frosty weather,
Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death!
Thou, or thy cause, shall never want assistance,
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee;
Command my heart: thou art every way its master.
Jaff. No; there's a secret pride in bravely dying.
Pierr. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad;
Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow:
Revenge! the attribute of gods, they stamped it
With their great image on our natures; die!
Consider well the cause that calls upon thee,
And if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember
Thy Belvidera suffers; Belvidera!
Die!—damn first!—what! be decently interred
In a churchyard, and mingle thy brave dust
With stinking rogues that rot in dirty winding-sheets,
Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o' th' soil.
Jaff. Oh!
Pierr. Well said, out with it, swear a little——
Jaff. Swear!
By sea and air! by earth, by heaven and hell,
I will revenge my Belvidera's tears!
Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a senator!
Pierr. A dog!
Jaff. Agreed.
Pierr. Shoot him.
Jaff. With all my heart.
No more: where shall we meet at night?
Pierr. I'll tell thee;
On the Rialto every night at twelve
I take my evening's walk of meditation,
There we two will meet, and talk of precious Mischief——
Jaff. Farewell.
Pierr. At twelve.
Jaff. At any hour, my plagues
Will keep me waking. [*Exit* PIERRE.
Tell me why, good Heaven,
Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,
Aspiring thoughts and elegant desires
That fill the happiest man? Ah! rather why
Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,
Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burdens?
Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?
Is this just dealing, Nature? Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Poor Belvidera!
Belv. Lead me, lead me, my virgins!
To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge!
Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face:
My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
At sight of thee, and bound with sprightful joys.
O smile, as when our loves were in their spring,
And cheer my fainting soul.
Jaff. As when our loves
Were in their spring? has then my fortune changed?
Art thou not Belvidera, still the same,
Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?

If thou art altered, where shall I have harbor?
Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?
Belv. Does this appear like change, or love decaying?
When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
With all the resolution of a strong truth:
Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarum thine
To a new charge of bliss? I joy more in thee,
Than did thy mother when she hugged thee first,
And blessed the gods for all her travail past.
Jaff. Can there in women be such glorious faith?
Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false;
O woman! lovely woman! Nature made thee
To temper man: we had been brutes without you;
Angels are painted fair, to look like you;
There's in you all that we believe of heaven,
Amazing brightness, purity and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love.
Belv. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich;
I have so much, my heart will surely break with't;
Vows cannot express it; when I would declare
How great's my joy, I am dumb with the big thought;
I swell, and sigh, and labor with my longing.
O lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent: where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens, and ever listening planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,
Give loose to love with kisses, kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.
Jaff. O Belvidera! double I am a beggar,
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee;
Want! worldly want! that hungry meagre fiend
Is at my heels, and chases me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
Framed for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banished by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be), to seek out
(In some far climate where our names are strangers)
For charitable succor; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads,
Wilt thou then talk thus to me? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?
Belv. Oh, I will love thee, even in madness love thee.
Though my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
Should suage itself and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some clift our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thy head;
And as thou sighing liest, and swelled with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.
Jaff. Hear this, you Heavens, and wonder how you made her!
Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world,
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine;
Like gaudy ships, the obsequious billows fall
And rise again, to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm and then devour you:
I, in my private bark, already wrecked,
Like a poor merchant driven on unknown land,
That had by chance packed up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and saved only that,
Since I must wander further on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store;
Resolved to scorn, and trust my fate no more. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

Enter Pierre *and* Aquilina.

Aquil. By all thy wrongs, thou'rt dearer to my arms
Than all the wealth of Venice: prithee stay,
And let us love to-night.
Pierr. No: there's fool,
There's fool about thee: when a woman sells
Her flesh to fools, her beauty's lost to me;
They leave a taint, a sully where they've past,
There's such a baneful quality about 'em,
E'en spoils complexions with their own nauseousness.
They infect all they touch; I cannot think
Of tasting anything a fool has palled.
Aquil. I loathe and scorn that fool thou mean'st, as much

Or more than thou canst; but the beast has gold
That makes him necessary; power too,
To qualify my character, and poise me
Equal with peevish virtue, that beholds
My liberty with envy; in their hearts
Are loose as I am; but an ugly power
Sits in their faces, and frights pleasures from 'em.
Pierr. Much good may't do you, madam, with your senator.
Aquil. My senator! why, canst thou think that wretch
E'er filled thy Aquilina's arms with pleasure?
Think'st thou, because I sometimes give him leave
To foil himself at what he is unfit for;
Because I force myself to endure and suffer him,
Think'st thou I love him? No, by all the joys
Thou ever gav'st me, his presence is my penance;
The worst thing an old man can be's a lover,
A mere *memento mori* to poor woman.
I never lay by his decrepit side,
But all that night I pondered on my grave.
Pierr. Would he were well sent thither!
Aquil. That's my wish too:
For then, my Pierre, I might have cause with pleasure
To play the hypocrite. Oh! how I could weep
Over the dying dotard, and kiss him too,
In hopes to smother him quite; then, when the time
Was come to pay my sorrows at his funeral,
For he has already made me heir to treasures,
Would make me out-act a real widow's whining:
How could I frame my face to fit my mourning,
With wringing hands attend him to his grave,
Fall swooning on his hearse; take mad possession
Even of the dismal vault where he lay buried;
There like the Ephesian matron dwell, till thou,
My lovely soldier, com'st to my deliverance;
Then throwing up my veil, with open arms
And laughing eyes, run to new dawning joy.
Pierr. No more! I have friends to meet me here to-night,
And must be private. As you prize my friendship,
Keep up your coxcomb: let him not pry nor listen
Nor fisk about the house as I have seen him,
Like a tame mumping squirrel with a bell on;
Curs will be abroad to bite him if you do.
Aquil. What friends to meet? may I not be of your council?
Pierr. How! a woman ask questions out of bed?
Go to your senator, ask him what passes
Amongst his brethren, he'll hide nothing from you
But pump not me for politics. No more!
Give order that whoever in my name
Comes here, receive admittance: so good-night.
Aquil. Must we ne'er meet again! Embrace no more!
Is love so soon and utterly forgotten!
Pierr. As you henceforward treat your fool, I'll think on't.
Aquil. Curst be all fools, and doubly curst myself,
The worst of fools—I die if he forsakes me;
And now to keep him, heaven or hell instruct me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

the rialto

Enter Jaffeir.

Jaff. I am here, and thus, the shades of night around me,
I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay, surely 'tis so with me;—
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids it not be quiet:
I've heard, how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wandered out at this dead time of night
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk:
Sure I'm so curst, that, tho' of Heaven forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell! hell! why sleepest thou?

Enter Pierre.

Pierr. Sure I have stayed too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
Speak, who goes there?
Jaff. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon: what's he that asks the question?
Pierr. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures
And ne'er betray their masters; never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend:
Jaffeir!
Jaff. The same. O Pierre! thou art come in season,
I was just going to pray.

Pierr. Ah, that's mechanic,
Priests make a trade on't, and yet starve by it too:
No praying, it spoils business, and time's precious;
Where's Belvidera?
Jaff. For a day or two
I've lodged her privately till I see farther
What fortune will do with me? Prithee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera——
Pierr. Speak not of her?
Jaff. Oh no!
Pierr. Nor name her? May be I wish her well.
Jaff. Who well?
Pierr. Thy wife, thy lovely Belvidera;
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done!
Jaff. Y' are merry, Pierre!
Pierr. I am so:
Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile;
We'll all rejoice; here's something to buy pins,
Marriage is chargeable.
Jaff. I but half wished
To see the Devil, and he's here already.
Well!
What must this buy, rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me which way I must be damned for this.
Pierr. When last we parted, we had no qualms like these,
But entertained each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reformed since our last meeting? What new miracles
Have happened? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?
Jaff. Kind Heaven! let heavy curses
Gall his old age; cramps, aches, rack his bones;
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart;
Oh, let him live till life become his burden!
Let him groan under't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease but late!
Pierr. Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretched the curse to all
The Senate round, as to one single villain?
Jaff. But curses stick not: could I kill with cursing,
By Heaven, I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted; senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills; but their wives and daughters
Die of their own diseases. Oh, for a curse
To kill with!
Pierr. Daggers, daggers, are much better!
Jaff. Ha!
Pierr. Daggers.
Jaff. But where are they?
Pierr. Oh, a thousand
May be disposed in honest hands in Venice.
Jaff. Thou talk'st in clouds.
Pierr. But yet a heart half wronged
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffeir.
Jaff. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands;
And have not I a friend will stick one here?
Pierr. Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherished
To a nobler purpose, I'd be that friend.
But thou hast better friends, friends, whom thy wrongs
Have made thy friends; friends worthy to be called so;
I'll trust thee with a secret: there are spirits
This hour at work. But as thou art a man,
Whom I have picked and chosen from the world,
Swear, that thou wilt be true to what I utter,
And when I have told thee, that which only gods
And men like gods are privy to, then swear,
No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.
Jaff. When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of oaths?
(Greensickness girls lose maidenheads with such counters)
For thou'rt so near my heart, that thou mayst see
Its bottom, sound its strength, and firmness to thee:
Is coward, fool, or villain, in my face?
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause,
For I am fit for honor's toughest task;
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province;
And for a villainous inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.
Pierr. Nay, it's a cause thou wilt be fond of, Jaffeir.
For it is founded on the noblest basis,
Our liberties, our natural inheritance;
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't;
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't:
Openly act a deed, the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when it's done.
Jaff. For liberty!
Pierr. For liberty, my friend!
Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,

And thy sequestered fortunes healed again.
I shall be freed from opprobrious wrongs,
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward:
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right; fools shall be pulled
From wisdom's seat; those baleful unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who (perched near Fortune's top)
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledged virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.
Jaff. What can I do?
Pierr. Canst thou not kill a senator?
Jaff. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him
For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had, and the brave story warms me.
Pierr. Swear, then!
Jaff. I do, by all those glittering stars
And yond great ruling planet of the night!
By all good powers above, and ill below!
By love and friendship, dearer than my life!
No power or death shall make me false to thee.
Pierr. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching: there I'll lead thee!
But be a man, for thou art to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest——
Jaff. I give thee thanks
For this kind warning: yes, I will be a man,
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou seest my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.
Come, let's begone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom: vengeance shall have room:
Revenge!
Pierr. And liberty!
Jaff. Revenge! revenge!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III

The Scene changes to Aquilina's *house, the Greek Courtesan.*

Enter Renault.

Renault. Why was my choice ambition, the first ground
A wretch can build on? It's indeed at distance
A good prospect, tempting to the view,
The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to heaven,
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us!
Who's there?

Enter Spinosa.

Spin. Renault, good morrow! for by this time
I think the scale of night has turned the balance,
And weighs up morning: has the clock struck twelve?
Ren. Yes, clocks will go as they are set. But man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain:
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mixed like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolved.
Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten!
Ren. What's then the cause that I am here alone?
Why are we not together?

Enter Eliot.

O sir, welcome!
You are an Englishman: when treason's hatching
One might have thought you'd not have been behindhand.
In what whore's lap have you been lolling?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef and a sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.
Eliot. Frenchman, you are saucy.
Ren. How!

Enter Bedamar *the Ambassador,* Theodore, Brainveil, Durand, Brabe, Revillido, Mezzana, Ternon, Retrosi, *Conspirators.*

Beda. At difference, fie!
Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl: should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this great assembly as in one great jewel,
To adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smiled on,—
Should you like boys wrangle for trifles?

Ren. Boys!
Beda. Renault, thy hand!
Ren. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.
Beda. Eliot, thou once hadst virtue; I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted: 'tis thy nation's glory,
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
Once more embrace, my friends—we'll all embrace—
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis!
Totters it not already?
Eliot. Would it were tumbling!
Beda. Nay, it shall down: this night we seal its ruin.

Enter Pierre.

O Pierre! thou art welcome!
Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovelily dreadful, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. O my Mars!
The poets that first feigned a god of war
Sure prophesied of thee.
Pierr. Friends! was not Brutus,
(I mean that Brutus who in open senate
Stabbed the first Cæsar that usurped the world)
A gallant man?
Ren. Yes, and Catiline too;
Though story wrong his fame; for he conspired
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.
Beda. And ours as much above it,
As, Renault, thou art superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.
Pierr. Then to what we aim at,
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?
Beda. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth: fate seems to have set
The business up, and given it to our care;
I hope there's not a heart nor hand amongst us
But is firm and ready.
All. All! We'll die with Bedamar.
Beda. O men,
Matchless, as will your glory be hereafter.
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.
Ren. What can lose it?
The public stock's a beggar; one Venetian
Trusts not another. Look into their stores
Of general safety; empty magazines,
A tattered fleet, a murmuring unpaid army,
Bankrupt nobility, a harassed commonalty,
A factious, giddy, and divided Senate,
Is all the strength of Venice. Let's destroy it;
Let's fill their magazines with arms to awe them,
Man out their fleet, and make their trade maintain it;
Let loose the murmuring army on their masters,
To pay themselves with plunder; lop their nobles
To the base roots, whence most of 'em first sprung;
Enslave the rout, whom smarting will make humble;
Turn out their droning Senate, and possess
That seat of empire which our souls were framed for.
Pierr. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world;
This wretched state has starved them in its service,
And by your bounty quickened, they're resolved
To serve your glory, and revenge their own!
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for the alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.
Beda. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence
Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease.
After this night it is resolved we meet
No more, till Venice own us for her lords.
Pierr. How lovelily the Adriatic whore,
Dressed in her flames, will shine! devouring flames!
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom
And hiss in her foundation.
Beda. Now if any
Amongst us that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest, he'd wish to save,
Let it be told; the general doom is sealed;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.
Pierr. I must confess, you there have touched my weakness,
I have a friend; hear it, such a friend!
My heart was ne'er shut to him: nay, I'll tell you,
He knows the very business of this hour;
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it;
We've changed a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.
Ren. How! all betrayed?
Pierr. No—I've dealt nobly with you;

I've brought my all into the public stock;
I had but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you!
Receive and cherish him: or if, when seen
And searched, you find him worthless, as my tongue
Has lodged this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears I wear a dagger here
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter Jaffeir *with a dagger.*

Beda. His presence bears the show of manly virtue.
Jaff. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncalled,
I dare approach this place of fatal counsels;
But I'm amongst you, and by Heaven it glads me,
To see so many virtues thus united,
To restore justice and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast; but if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the curst assembled Senate;
It shrinks not, though I meet a father there.
Would you behold this city flaming? Here's
A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To the arsenal, and set its gates on fire.
Ren. You talk this well, sir.
Jaff. Nay—by Heaven I'll do this.
Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces;
You fear me a villain, and indeed it's odd
To hear a stranger talk thus at first meeting,
Of matters, that have been so well debated;
But I come ripe with wrongs as you with counsels,
I hate this Senate, am a foe to Venice;
A friend to none, but men resolved like me,
To push on mischief; oh, did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!
Beda. Pierre! I must embrace him,
My heart beats to this man as if it knew him.
Ren. I never loved these huggers.
Jaff. Still I see
The cause delights me not. Your friends survey me,
As I were dangerous—but I come armed
Against all doubt, and to your trust will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.
My Belvidera! Ho! My Belvidera!
Beda. What wonder next?
Jaff. Let me entreat you,
As I have henceforth hopes to call ye friends,
That all but the ambassador, [and] this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,
Withdraw a while to spare a woman's blushes.

[*Exeunt all but* Bedamar, Renault, Jaffeir, Pierre.

Beda. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?
Jaff. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Enter Belvidera.

Belv. Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour? Who?
That voice was wont to come in gentler whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love:
Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?
Jaff. Indeed 'tis late.
Belv. Oh! I have slept and dreamt,
And dreamt again. Where hast thou been, thou loiterer?
Though my eyes closed, my arms have still been opened;
Stretched every way betwixt my broken slumbers,
To search if thou wert come to crown my rest;
There's no repose without thee. Oh, the day
Too soon will break, and wake us to our sorrow;
Come, come to bed, and bid thy cares good night.
Jaff. O Belvidera! we must change the scene
In which the past delights of life were tasted:
The poor sleep little, we must learn to watch
Our labors late, and early every morning,
Midst winter frosts, thin clad and fed with sparing,
Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day.
Belv. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead me?
Methinks I read distraction in your face,
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me:
You shake and tremble too! your blood runs cold!
Heavens guard my love, and bless his heart with patience!
Jaff. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
Who has ordained it so, that thou and I,
(Thou the divinest good man e'er possessed,
And I the wretched'st of the race of man)
This very hour, without one tear, must part.
Belv. Part! must we part? Oh! am I then forsaken?
Will my love cast me off? have my misfortunes

Offended him so highly, that he'll leave me?
Why drag you from me; whither are you going?
My dear! my life! my love!
Jaff. Oh.friends!
Belv. Speak to me.
Jaff. Take her from my heart;
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tenderest care
Relieve her troubles and assauge her sorrows.
Ren. Rise, madam! and command amongst your servants!
Jaff. To you, sirs, and your honors, I bequeath her,
And with her this, when I prove unworthy—
[*Gives a dagger.*
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he, who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still-increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.
Belv. Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply;
Or send me to some distant clime your slave,
But let it be far off, lest my complainings
Should reach his guilty ears, and shake his peace.
Jaff. No, Belvidera, I've contrived thy honor.
Trust to my faith, and be but fortune kind
To me, as I'll preserve that faith unbroken,
When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a height,
Shall gather all the gazing world about thee,
To wonder what strange virtue placed thee there.
But if we ne'er meet more——
Belv. O thou unkind one,
Never meet more? have I deserved this from you?
Look on me, tell me, speak, thou dear deceiver,
Why am I separated from thy love?
If I am false, accuse me; but if true,
Don't, prithee, don't in poverty forsake me,
But pity the sad heart, that's torn with parting.
Yet hear me! yet recall me——
[*Exeunt* RENAULT, BEDAMAR, *and* BELVIDERA.
Jaff. O my eyes!
Look not that way, but turn yourselves awhile
Into my heart, and be weaned all together.
My friend, where art thou?
Pierr. Here, my honor's brother.
Jaff. Is Belvidera gone?
Pierr. Renault has led her
Back to her own apartment; but, by Heaven!
Thou must not see her more till our work's over.
Jaff. No.
Pierr. Not for your life.
Jaff. O Pierre, wert thou but she,
How I could pull thee down into my heart,
Gaze on thee till my eye-strings cracked with love,
Till all my sinews with its fire extended,
Fixed me upon the rack of ardent longing;
Then swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,
Come like a panting turtle to thy breast,
On thy soft bosom, hovering, bill and play,
Confess the cause why last I fled away;
Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er
And never follow false ambition more.
[*Exeunt ambo.*

ACT III

SCENE I

Enter AQUILINA *and her Maid.*

Aquil. Tell him I am gone to bed: tell him I am not at home; tell him I've better company with me, or any thing; tell him, in short, I will not see him, the eternal, troublesome, vexatious fool: he's worse company than an ignorant physician——I'll not be disturbed at these unseasonable hours.

Maid. But madam! He's here already, just entered the doors.

Aquil. Turn him out again, you unnecessary, useless, giddy-brained ass! If he will not be gone, set the house a-fire and burn us both; I had rather meet a toad in my dish than that old hideous animal in my chamber to-night.

Enter ANTONIO.

Anto. Nacky, Nacky, Nacky—how dost do, Nacky? Hurry durry. I am come, little Nacky; past eleven o'clock, a late hour; time in all conscience to go to bed, Nacky—Nacky, did I say? Ay Nacky; Aquilina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina, quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky, Queen Nacky—come let's to bed—you fubbs, you pugg you—you little puss—purree tuzzey—I am a senator.

Aquil. You are a fool, I am sure.

Anto. May be so too, sweetheart. Never the worse senator for all that. Come Nacky, Nacky, let's have a game at rump, Nacky.

Aquil. You would do well, signior, to be troublesome here no longer, but leave me to myself; be sober and go home, sir.

Anto. Home, Madonna!

Aquil. Ay, home, sir. Who am I?

Anto. Madonna, as I take it, you are my—you are—thou art my little Nicky Nacky—that's all!

Aquil. I find you are resolved to be troublesome, and so to make short of the matter in few words, I hate you, detest you, loathe you, I am weary of you, sick of you—hang you, you are an old, silly, impertinent, impotent, solicitous, coxcomb, crazy in your head, and lazy in your body, love to be meddling with everything, and if you had not money, you are good for nothing.

Anto. "Good for nothing!" Hurry durry, I'll try that presently. Sixty-one years old, and good for nothing: that's brave. [*To the Maid.*] Come come come, Mistress Fiddle-faddle, turn you out for a season; go turn out, I say, it is our will and pleasure to be private some moments—out, out when you are bid to—[*Puts her out and locks the door.*] "Good for nothing," you say.

Aquil. Why, what are you good for?

Anto. In the first place, madam, I am old, and consequently very wise, very wise, Madonna, d'ye mark that? in the second place, take notice, if you please, that I am a senator, and when I think fit can make speeches, Madonna. Hurry durry, I can make a speech in the Senate-house now and then—would make your hair stand on end, Madonna.

Aquil. What care I for your speeches in the Senate-house: if you would be silent here, I should thank you.

Anto. Why, I can make speeches to thee too, my lovely Madonna; for example—my cruel fair one, [*takes out a purse of gold and at every pause shakes it*], since it is my fate, that you should with your servant angry prove; tho' late at night—I hope 'tis not too late with this to gain reception for my love—there's for thee, my little Nicky Nacky—take it, here take it—I say take it, or I'll fling it at your head—how now, rebel!

Aquil. Truly, my illustrious Senator, I must confess your honor is at present most profoundly eloquent indeed.

Anto. Very well; come, now let's sit down and think upon't a little—come sit I say—sit down by me a little, my Nicky Nacky, ha!—[*Sits down.*] Hurry durry—"good for nothing!"

Aquil. No, sir, if you please, I can know my distance and stand.

Anto. Stand: how? Nacky up and I down! Nay, then, let me exclaim with the poet,

Show me a case more pitiful who can,
A standing woman, and a falling man.

Hurry durry—not sit down—see this, ye gods—You won't sit down?

Aquil. No, sir.

Anto. Then look you now, suppose me a bull, a Basan-bull, the bull of bulls, or any bull. Thus up I get and with my brows thus bent—I broo, I say I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down, will you?—I broo——

[*Bellows like a bull, and drives her about.*

Aquil. Well, sir, I must endure this. [*She sits down.*] Now your honor has been a bull, pray what beast will your worship please to be next?

Anto. Now I'll be a senator again, and thy lover, little Nicky Nacky! [*He sits by her.*] Ah toad, toad, toad, toad! spit in my face a little, Nacky—spit in my face prithee, spit in my face, never so little: spit but a little bit—spit, spit, spit, spit, when you are bid, I say; do prithee spit—now, now, now, spit: what, you won't spit, will you? Then I'll be a dog.

Aquil. A dog, my lord?

Anto. Ay, a dog—and I'll give thee this t'other purse to let me be a dog—and to use me like a dog a little. Hurry durry—I will—here 'tis. [*Gives the purse.*

Aquil. Well, with all my heart. But let me beseech your dogship to play your tricks over as fast as you can, that you may come to stinking the sooner, and be turned out of doors as you deserve.

Anto. Ay, ay—no matter for that—that—[*he gets under the table*]—shan't move me——Now, bow wow wow, bow wow . . .

[*Barks like a dog.*

Aquil. Hold, hold, hold, sir, I beseech you: what is't you do? If curs bite, they must be kicked, sir. Do you see, kicked thus?

Anto. Ay, with all my heart: do kick, kick on, now I am under the table, kick again—kick harder—harder yet, bow wow wow, wow, bow—'od, I'll have a snap at thy shins—bow wow wow, wow, bow—'od, she kicks bravely.——

Aquil. Nay, then I'll go another way to work with you; and I think here's an instrument fit for the purpose. [*Fetches a whip and bell.*] What, bite your mistress, sirrah! out, out of doors, you dog, to kennel and be hanged—bite your mistress by the legs, you rogue—— [*She whips him.*

Anto. Nay, prithee, Nacky, now thou art too loving: Hurry durry, 'od I'll be a dog no longer.

Aquil. Nay, none of your fawning and grinning: but be gone, or here's the discipline: what, bite your mistress by the legs, you mongrel? out of doors—hout hout, to kennel, sirrah! go.

Anto. This is very barbarous usage, Nacky, very barbarous: look you, I will not go—I will not stir from the door, that I resolve—hurry durry, what, shut me out?

[*She whips him out.*

Aquil. Ay, and if you come here any more to-night I'll have my footmen lug you, you

cur: what, bite your poor mistress Nacky, sirrah!

Enter Maid.

Maid. Heavens, madam! What's the matter? [*He howls at the door like a dog.*

Aquil. Call my footmen hither presently.

Enter two Footmen.

Maid. They are here already, madam, the house is all alarmed with a strange noise, that nobody knows what to make of.

Aquil. Go all of you and turn that troublesome beast in the next room out of my house—if I ever see him within these walls again, without my leave for his admittance, you sneaking rogues, I'll have you poisoned all, poisoned like rats; every corner of the house shall stink of one of you; go, and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. So now for my Pierre:

Thus when godlike lover was displeased,
We sacrifice our fool and he's appeased.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Enter Belvidera.

Belv. I'm sacrificed! I am sold! betrayed to shame!
Inevitable ruin has inclosed me!
No sooner was I to my bed repaired
To weigh, and (weeping) ponder my condition,
But the old hoary wretch, to whose false care
My peace and honor was entrusted, came
(Like Tarquin) ghastly with infernal lust.
O thou, Roman Lucrece! Thou couldst find friends
To vindicate thy wrong;
I never had but one, and he's proved false;
He that should guard my virtue, has betrayed it;
Left me! undone me! O that I could hate him!
Where shall I go? O whither, whither wander?

Enter Jaffeir.

Jaff. Can Belvidera want a resting place,
When these poor arms are open to receive her?
Oh, 'tis in vain to struggle with desires
Strong as my love to thee; for every moment
I'm from thy sight, the heart within my bosom
Moans like a tender infant in its cradle
Whose nurse has left it; come, and with the songs
Of gentle love persuade it to its peace.

Belv. I fear the stubborn wanderer will not own me,
'Tis grown a rebel to be ruled no longer,
Scorns the indulgent bosom that first lulled it,
And like a disobedient child disdains
The soft authority of Belvidera.

Jaff. There was a time——

Belv. Yes, yes, there was a time
When Belvidera's tears, her cries, and sorrows,
Were not despised; when if she chanced to sigh,
Or look but sad—there was indeed a time
When Jaffeir would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eased her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her till he found the cause.
But let her now weep seas,
Cry, till she rend the earth; sigh till she burst
Her heart asunder; still he bears it all;
Deaf as the wind, and as the rocks unshaken.

Jaff. Have I been deaf? am I that rock unmoved,
Against whose root tears beat and sighs are sent?
In vain have I beheld thy sorrows calmly!
Witness against me, Heavens, have I done this?
Then bear me in a whirlwind back again,
And let that angry dear one ne'er forgive me!
O thou too rashly censurest of my love!
Couldst thou but think how I have spent this night,
Dark and alone, no pillow to my head,
Rest in my eyes, nor quiet in my heart,
Thou wouldst not, Belvidera, sure thou wouldst not
Talk to me thus, but like a pitying angel,
Spreading thy wings, come settle on my breast,
And hatch warm comfort there, ere sorrows freeze it.

Belv. Why, then, poor mourner, in what baleful corner
Hast thou been talking with that witch the Night?
On what cold stone hast thou been stretched along,
Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
To mix with theirs the accents of thy woes!
Oh, now I find the cause my love forsakes me!
I am no longer fit to bear a share
In his concernments: my weak female virtue
Must not be trusted; 'tis too frail and tender.

Jaff. O Portia! Portia! what a soul was thine!

Belv. That Portia was a woman, and when Brutus,

Big with the fate of Rome (Heaven guard thy safety!)
Concealed from her the labors of his mind,
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flowed from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles, as his love:
Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
Thou gavest last night in parting with me; strike it
Here to my heart; and as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as Cato's daughter's.
Jaff. Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy,
Unworthy so much virtue: teach me how
I may deserve such matchless love as thine,
And see with what attention I'll obey thee.
Belv. Do not despise me: that's the all I ask.
Jaff. Despise thee! Hear me——
Belv. Oh, thy charming tongue
Is but too well acquainted with my weakness,
Knows, let it name but love, my melting heart
Dissolves within my breast; till with closed eyes
I reel into thy arms, and all's forgotten.
Jaff. What shall I do?
Belv. Tell me! be just, and tell me
Why dwells that busy cloud upon thy face?
Why am I made a stranger? why that sigh,
And I not know the cause? Why, when the world
Is wrapt in rest, why chooses then my love
To wander up and down in horrid darkness,
Loathing his bed, and these desiring arms?
Why are these eyes bloodshot with tedious watching?
Why starts he now? and looks as if he wished
His fate were finished? Tell me, ease my fears;
Lest, when we next time meet, I want the power
To search into the sickness of thy mind,
But talk as wildly then as thou look'st now.
Jaff. O Belvidera!
Belv. Why was I last night delivered to a villain?
Jaff. Ha, a villain!
Belv. Yes! to a villain! Why at such an hour
Meets that assembly all made up of wretches
That look as hell had drawn 'em into league?
Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
Was I delivered with such dreadful ceremonies?
"To you, sirs, and to your honor I bequeath her,
And with her this: whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest,—then strike it to her heart?"
Oh! why's that *rest* concealed from me? Must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?
For such I know I am; that's all my value!
But by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves;
Straight to the Senate, tell 'em all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me!
Jaff. Is this the Roman virtue! this the blood
That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter's!
Would she have e'er betrayed her Brutus?
Belv. No:
For Brutus trusted her: wert thou so kind,
What would not Belvidera suffer for thee?
Jaff. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.
Belv. Look not upon me, as I am a woman,
But as a bone, thy wife, thy friend, who long
Has had admission to thy heart, and there
Studied the virtues of thy gallant nature;
Thy constancy, thy courage and thy truth,
Have been my daily lesson: I have learnt them,
Am bold as thou, can suffer or despise
The worst of fates for thee, and with thee share them.
Jaff. Oh you divinest powers! look down and hear
My prayers! instruct me to reward this virtue!
Yet think a little ere thou tempt me further:
Think I have a tale to tell, will shake thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of
Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:
Then if thou shouldst betray me!
Belv. Shall I swear?
Jaff. No: do not swear: I would not violate
Thy tender nature with so rude a bond:
But as thou hopest to see me live my days,
And love thee long, lock this within thy breast;
I've bound myself by all the strictest sacraments
Divine and human——
Belv. Speak!
Jaff. To kill thy father——
Belv. My father!
Jaff. Nay, the throats of the whole Senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera: he amongst us
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,

Is damned. How rich and beauteous will the face
Of ruin look, when these wide streets run blood;
I and the glorious partners of my fortune
Shouting, and striding o'er the prostrate dead,
Still to new waste; whilst thou, far off in safety
Smiling, shalt see the wonders of our daring;
And when night comes, with praise and love receive me.

Belv. Oh!

Jaff. Have a care, and shrink not even in thought!
For if thou dost——

Belv. I know it, thou wilt kill me.
Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe:
Murder my father! though his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing,
Driven me to basest wants, can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butchered in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroyed?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being?
Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hired slaves, bravos, and common stabbers,
Nose-slitters, alley-lurking villains? join
With such a crew and take a ruffian's wages
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

Jaff. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've engaged
With men of souls, fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them,
But 's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.

Belv. What's he, to whose curst hands last night thou gav'st me?
Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story
Would rouse thy lion-heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury.

Jaff. Speak on, I charge thee!

Belv. O my love! if e'er
Thy Belvidera's peace deserved thy care,
Remove me from this place: last night, last night——

Jaff. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

Belv. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the power of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I lain on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approached me, loose, unbuttoned,
Ready for violation: then my heart
Throbbed with its fears: oh, how I wept and sighed
And shrunk and trembled; wished in vain for him
That should protect me. Thou, alas! wert gone!

Jaff. Patience, sweet Heaven, till I make vengeance sure!

Belv. He drew the hideous dagger forth thou gav'st him,
And with upbraiding smiles, he said, "Behold it;
This is the pledge of a false husband's love:"
And in my arms then pressed, and would have clasped me;
But with my cries I scared his coward heart,
Till he withdrew, and muttered vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honor,
Thy love, all's staked, and all will go to ruin.

Jaff. No more: I charge thee keep this secret close;
Clear up thy sorrows, look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honor;
I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy love.

Belv. Oh, should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaff. Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night, to purchase the creation.

Belv. When shall we meet again?

Jaff. Anon at twelve!
I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms,
Come like a travelled dove and bring thee peace.

Belv. Indeed!

Jaff. By all our loves!

Belv. 'Tis hard to part:
But sure no falsehood ever looked so fairly.
Farewell—remember twelve.

[*Exit* Belvidera.

Jaff. Let Heaven forget me
When I remember not thy truth, thy love.
How curst is my condition! tossed and justled,
From every corner; fortune's common fool,
The jest of rogues, an instrumental ass
For villains to lay loads of shame upon,
And drive about just for their ease and scorn.

Enter Pierre.

Pierr. Jaffeir!

Jaff. Who calls!
Pierr. A friend, that could have wished
To have found thee otherwise employed: what, hunt
A wife on the dull foil! sure a staunch husband
Of all hounds is the dullest! Wilt thou never,
Never be weaned from caudles and confections?
What feminine tale hast thou been listening to,
Of unaired shirts; catarrhs and toothache got
By thin-soled shoes? Damnation! that a fellow
Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus in corners
To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind.
Jaff. May not a man then trifle out an hour
With a kind woman and not wrong his calling?
Pierr. Not in a cause like ours.
Jaff. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damned condition: for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm called lechery has touched it;
'Tis tainted vilely: wouldst thou think it, Renault
(That mortified, old, withered, winter rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest;
I found him out for watering at my wife:
He visited her last night like a kind guardian:
Faith, she has some temptations, that's the truth on't.
Pierr. He durst not wrong his trust!
Jaff. 'Twas something late, though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.
Pierr. Was she in bed?
Jaff. Yes, faith, in virgin sheets
White as her bosom, Pierre, dished neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Oh, how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him!
Pierr. Patience guide me!
He used no violence?
Jaff. No, no! out on't, violence!
Played with her neck, brushed her with his grey-beard,
Struggled and towzed, tickled her till she squeaked a little,
May be, or so—but not a jot of violence——
Pierr. Damn him!
Jaff. Ay, so say I: but hush, no more on't;
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster yet: though no man knows
What fate he's born to: sure 'tis near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders:
Will the ambassador be here in person?
Pierr. No; he has sent commission to that villain,
Renault, to give the executing charge.
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper; for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.
Jaff. Fear not, I'm cool as patience:
Had he completed my dishonor, rather
Than hazard the success our hopes are ripe for,
I'd bear it all with mortifying virtue.
Pierr. He's yonder coming this way through the hall;
His thoughts seem full.
Jaff. Prithee retire, and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him to some trial,
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.
Pierr. Be careful, then. [*Exit* PIERRE.
Jaff. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What, be a devil! take a damning oath
For shedding native blood! can there be a sin
In merciful repentance? O this villain!

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse! and peevish! what a slave is man!
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him!
Despatch the tool her husband—that were well.
Who's there?
Jaff. A man.
Ren. My friend, my near ally!
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge,
Is very well.
Jaff. Sir, are you sure of that?
Stands she in perfect health? beats her pulse even?
Neither too hot nor cold?
Ren. What means that question?
Jaff. Oh, women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant as their wishes, always wavering,
And never fixed; was it not boldly done
Even at first sight to trust the thing I loved
(A tempting treasure too!) with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine? but thou art honest.
Ren. Who dares accuse me?
Jaff. Curst be him that doubts
Thy virtue: I have tried it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honor,
I'd put it into thy keeping; for I know thee.
Ren. Know me!
Jaff. Ay, know thee: there's no falsehood in thee.

Thou look'st just as thou art: let us embrace.
Now wouldst thou cut my throat or I cut thine?
Ren. You dare not do't.
Jaff. You lie, sir.
Ren. How!
Jaff. No more.
'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, DURAND, BRAINVEIL, *and the rest of the Conspirators.*

Ren. Spinosa, Theodore!
Spin. The same.
Ren. You are welcome!
Spin. You are trembling, sir.
Ren. 'Tis a cold night indeed, I am aged,
Full of decay and natural infirmities;
[PIERRE *re-enters.*
We shall be warm, my friend, I hope, to-morrow.
Pierr. [*aside*]. 'Twas not well done, thou shouldst have stroked him
And not have galled him.
Jaff. [*aside*]. Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heaven! where am I? beset with cursed fiends,
That wait to damn me: what a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature—hush, my heart.
Ren. My friends, 'tis late: are we assembled all?
Where's Theodore?
Theo. At hand.
Ren. Spinosa.
Spin. Here.
Ren. Brainveil.
Brain. I'm ready.
Ren. Durand and Brabe.
Dur. Command us,
We are both prepared!
Ren. Mezzana, Revillido,
Ternon, Retrosi; oh, you are men, I find,
Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons.
To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Decked in your honors! Are the soldiers ready?
Omn. All, all.
Ren. You, Durand, with your thousand must possess
St. Mark's; you, captain, know your charge already:
'Tis to secure the Ducal Palace: you,
Brabe, with a hundred more must gain the Secque.
With the like number Brainveil to the Procuralle.
Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
Till in each place you post sufficient guards:
Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet.
Jaff. [*aside*]. O reverend cruelty! damned bloody villain!
Ren. During this execution, Durand, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast,
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets; whilst Revillido,
Mezzana, Ternon, and Retrosi, guard you.
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the arsenal gates;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon, if it dare resist,
Batter it to ruin. But above all I charge you
Shed blood enough, spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition; if there live a senator
After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends;
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.
Jaff. [*aside*]. Merciless, horrid slave!—Ay, blood enough!
Shed blood enough, old Renault: how thou charm'st me!
Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell till fate
Join us again, or separate us ever:
First, let's embrace. Heaven knows who next shall thus
Wing ye together: but let's all remember
We wear no common cause upon our swords;
Let each man think that on his single virtue
Depends the good and fame of all the rest,
Eternal honor or perpetual infamy.
Let's remember through what dreadful hazards
Propitious fortune hitherto has led us,
How often on the brink of some discovery
Have we stood tottering, yet still kept our ground
So well, the busiest searchers ne'er could follow
Those subtle tracks which puzzled all suspicion:
You droop, sir.
Jaff. No; with a most profound attention
I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.
Ren. Though there be yet few hours 'twixt them and ruin,
Are not the Senate lulled in full security,
Quiet and satisfied, as fools are always!
Never did so profound repose forerun
Calamity so great: nay, our good fortune
Has blinded the most piercing of mankind;
Strengthened the fearful'st, charmed the most suspectful,
Confounded the most subtle; for we live,

We live, my friends, and quickly shall our life
Prove fatal to these tyrants: let's consider
That we destroy oppression, avarice,
A people nursed up equally with vices
And loathsome lusts, which nature most abhors,
And such as without shame she cannot suffer.
Jaff. [*aside*]. O Belvidera, take me to thy arms
And show me where's my peace, for I have lost it. [*Exit* Jaffeir.
Ren. Without the least remorse then let's resolve
With fire and sword to exterminate these tyrants,
And when we shall behold those curst tribunals,
Stained by the tears and sufferings of the innocent,
Burning with flames rather from Heaven than ours,
The raging, furious and unpitying soldier
Pulling his reeking dagger from the bosoms
Of gasping wretches; death in every quarter,
With all that sad disorder can produce,
To make a spectacle of horror: then,
Then let us call to mind, my dearest friends,
That there is nothing pure upon the earth,
That the most valued things have most alloys,
And that in change of all those vile enormities,
Under whose weight this wretched country labors,
The means are only in our hands to crown them.
Pierr. And may those powers above that are propitious
To gallant minds record this cause, and bless it.
Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found amongst us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance were enough for such a villain?
Eliot. Death here without repentance, hell hereafter.
Ren. Let that be my lot, if as here I stand
Listed by fate amongst her darling sons,
Though I'd one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature; though one hour
Had given us birth, one fortune fed our wants,
One only love, and that but of each other,
Still filled our minds: could I have such a friend
Joined in this cause, and had but ground to fear
Meant foul play; may this right hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you. Who
Would not do less? Wouldst not thou, Pierre, the same?
Pierr. You've singled me, sir, out for this hard question,
As if 'twere started only for my sake!
Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom,
Search it with all your swords! Am I a traitor?
Ren. No: but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffeir?
Spin. He left the room just now in strange disorder.
Ren. Nay, there is danger in him: I observed him,
During the time I took for explanation,
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother.
His looks grew full of sadness and surprise,
All which betrayed a wavering spirit in him,
That labored with reluctancy and sorrow.
What's requisite for safety must be done
With speedy execution: he remains
Yet in our power: I for my own part wear
A dagger.
Pierr. Well.
Ren. And I could wish it——
Pierr. Where?
Ren. Buried in his heart.
Pierr. Away! we're yet all friends;
No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood amongst us.
Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house,
Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.
Pierr. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the blood
That's dear to me! Is't you? or you? or you, sir?
What, not one speak? how you stand gaping all
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there;
Yet not a word: [*to* Renault] then, sir, I'll tell you a secret,
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue!
Ren. A coward—— [*Handles his sword.*
Pierr. Put, put up the sword, old man,
Thy hand shakes at it; come, let's heal this breach,
I am too hot; we yet may live as friends.
Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

Pierr. Again: who's that?
Spin. 'Twas I.
Theo. And I.
Revill. And I.
Eliot. And all.
Ren. Who are on my side?
Spin. Every honest sword;
Let's die like men and not be sold like slaves.
Pierr. One such word more, by Heaven, I'll to the Senate
And hang ye all, like dogs in clusters.
Why peep your coward swords half out their shells?
Why do you not all brandish them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing?
Ren. Go to the Senate and betray us, hasten,
Secure thy wretched life, we fear to die
Less than thou dar'st be honest.
Pierr. That's rank falsehood.
Fear'st not thou death? fie, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had Jaffeir's wife proved kind, he had still been true.
Foh—how that stinks!
Thou die! thou kill my friend, or thou, or thou,
Or thou, with that lean, withered, wretched face!
Away! disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honor calls you;
I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly—
Hence, hence, I say. [*Exit* Renault *angrily.*
Spin. I fear we've been to blame:
And done too much.
Theo. 'Twas too far urged against the man you loved.
Revill. Here, take our swords and crush 'em with your feet.
Spin. Forgive us, gallant friend.
Pierr. Nay, now you've found
The way to melt and cast me as you will:
I'll fetch this friend and give him to your mercy:
Nay, he shall die if you will take him from me;
For your repose I'll quit my heart's jewel,
But would not have him torn away by villains
And spiteful villainy.
Spin. No; may you both
For ever live and fill the world with fame!
Pierr. Now you are too kind. Whence rose all this discord?
Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we scaped!
How near a fall was all we had long been building!
What an eternal blot had stained our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fallen a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butchered by those whose cause he came to cherish!
Oh, could you know him all as I have known him,
How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,
You would not leave this place till you had seen him;
Humbled yourself before him, kissed his feet,
And gained remission for the worst of follies;
Come but to-morrow all your doubts shall end,
And to your loves me better recommend,
That I've preserved your fame, and saved my friend. [*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT IV

Scene I

Enter Jaffeir *and* Belvidera.

Jaff. Where dost thou lead me? Every step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a racked friend. O my dear charming ruin!
Where are we wandering?
Belv. To eternal honor;
To do a deed shall chronicle thy name,
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have saved sinking nations: thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserved
From horrid violation: every street
Shall be adorned with statues to thy honor,
And at thy feet this great inscription written,
Remember him that propped the fall of Venice.
Jaff. Rather, remember him who after all
The sacred bonds of oaths and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears
Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth and honor,
To sacrifice the bosom that relieved him.
Why wilt thou damn me?
Belv. O inconstant man!
How will you promise? how will you deceive?
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,
Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,
And let thy dagger do its bloody office;
O that kind dagger, Jaffeir, how 'twill look
Stuck through my heart, drenched in my blood to the hilts!
Whilst these poor dying eyes shall with their tears

No more torment thee, then thou wilt be free:
Or if thou think'st it nobler, let me live
Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust
Of that infernal devil, that old fiend
That's damned himself and would undo mankind:
Last night, my love——
Jaff. Name, name it not again,
It shows a beastly image to my fancy,
Will wake me into madness. Oh, the villain!
That durst approach such purity as thine
On terms so vile: destruction, swift destruction
Fall on my coward-head, and make my name
The common scorn of fools if I forgive him;
If I forgive him, if I not revenge
With utmost rage and most unstaying fury,
Thy suffering, thou dear darling of my life, love!
Belv. Delay no longer, then, but to the Senate;
And tell the dismal'st story ever uttered,
Tell them what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepared, how near's the fatal hour!
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed: save the poor tender lives
Of all those little infants which the swords
Of murtherers are whetting for this moment:
Think thou already hear'st their dying screams,
Think that thou seest their sad distracted mothers
Kneeling before thy feet, and begging pity
With torn dishevell'd hair and streaming eyes,
Their naked mangled breasts besmeared with blood,
And even the milk with which their fondled babes,
Softly they hushed, dropping in anguish from 'em.
Think thou seest this, and then consult thy heart.
Jaff. Oh!
Belv. Think too, if [that] thou lose this present minute,
What miseries the next day bring upon thee.
Imagine all the horrors of that night,
Murder and rapine, waste and desolation,
Confusedly ranging. Think what then may prove
My lot! the ravisher may then come safe,
And midst the terror of the public ruin
Do a damned deed; perhaps to lay a train
May catch thy life; then where will be revenge,
The dear revenge that's due to such a wrong?
Jaff. By all Heaven's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee,
For every word thou speak'st strikes through my heart
Like a new light, and shows it how it has wandered;
Just what thou'st made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson, where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy and friends:
Must I betray my friends? Ah, take me quickly,
Secure me well before that thought's renewed;
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.
Belv. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera?
Jaff. No, thou'rt my soul itself; wealth, friendship, honor,
All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summed in thee: methinks when in thy arms
Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute's more
Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
Why was such happiness not given me pure?
Why dashed with cruel wrongs, and bitter wantings?
Come, lead me forward now like a tame lamb
To sacrifice, thus in his fatal garlands,
Decked fine and pleased, the wanton skips and plays,
Trots by the enticing flattering priestess' side,
And much transported with his little pride,
Forgets his dear companions of the plain
Till, by her bound, he's on the altar lain,
Yet then too hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain.

Enter Officer and six Guards.

Offic. Stand; who goes there?
Belv. Friends.
Jaff. Friends, Belvidera! hide me from my friends:
By Heaven, I'd rather see the face of hell,
Than meet the man I love.
Offic. But what friends are you?
Belv. Friends to the Senate and the State of Venice.
Offic. My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the Council,
Who now are sitting.
Jaff. Sir, you shall be obeyed.
Hold, brutes, stand off, none of your paws upon me.
Now the lot's cast, and fate, do what thou wilt! [*Exeunt guarded.*

Scene II

The Senate-house.

Where appear sitting, the Duke of Venice, Priuli, Antonio, *and eight other Senators.*

Duke. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak; why are we assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The State of Venice' honor, or its safety?
Priu. Could words express the story I have to tell you,
Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
We all should weep; tear off these purple robes,
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heaven.
Heaven knows if yet there be an hour to come
Ere Venice be no more.
All Senators. How!
Priu. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's formed a dark conspiracy,
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends, our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes: nay, the hour, too, fixed;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this moment,
And the wild waste begun: from unknown hands
I had this warning: but if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butchered, but do something
That may inform the world in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruined though we were.
[*A noise without.*
Room, room, make room for some prisoners——
Second Senator. Let's raise the city.

Enter Officer and Guard.

Priu. Speak there, what disturbance?
Offic. Two prisoners have the guard seized in the streets,
Who say they come to inform this reverend Senate
About the present danger.

Enter Jaffeir *and* Belvidera *guarded.*

All. Give 'em entrance——
Well, who are you?
Jaff. A villain.
Anto. Short and pithy.
The man speaks well.
Jaff. Would every man that hears me
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.
Duke. 'Tis rumored that a plot has been contrived
Against this State; that you have a share in't too.
If you're a villain, to redeem your honor,
Unfold the truth and be restored with mercy.
Jaff. Think not that I to save my life come hither,
I know its value better; but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fixed and sealed. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice;
But use me as my dealings may deserve
And I may prove a friend.
Duke. The slave capitulates;
Give him the tortures.
Jaff. That you dare not do,
Your fears won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of,
Truth which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.
Cowards are scared with threat'nings; boys are whipp'd
Into confessions: but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
"Give him the tortures!" Name but such a thing
Again, by Heaven I'll shut these lips for ever,
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels
Shall force a groan away—that you may guess at.
Anto. A bloody-minded fellow, I'll warrant;
A damned bloody-minded fellow.
Duke. Name your conditions.
Jaff. For myself full pardon,
Besides the lives of two and twenty friends
[*Delivers a list.*
Whose names are here enrolled: nay, let their crimes
Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths
And sacred promise of this reverend Council,
That in a full assembly of the Senate
The thing I ask be ratified. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secrets of your danger.
All. We'll swear.
Duke. Propose the oath.
Jaff. By all the hopes
Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear.
All. We all swear,
Jaff. To grant me what I've asked,
Ye swear?
All. We swear.
Jaff. And as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be blest
Or curst for ever.

All. Else be curst for ever.
Jaff. Then here's the list, and with it the full disclose
Of all that threatens you.
[*Delivers another paper.*
Now, fate, thou hast caught me.
Anto. Why, what a dreadful catalogue of cut-throats is here! I'll warrant you, not one of these fellows but has a face like a lion. I dare not so much as read their names over.
Duke. Give orders that all diligent search be made
To seize these men, their characters are public;
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of a famed Grecian courtesan
Called Aquilina; see that place secured.
Anto.
What, my Nicky Nacky, hurry durry,
Nicky Nacky in the plot—I'll make a speech.
Most noble Senators,
What headlong apprehension drives you on,
Right noble, wise and truly solid senators,
To violate the laws and rights of nations?
The lady is a lady of renown.
'Tis true, she holds a house of fair reception,
And though I say it myself, as many more
Can say as well as I.
Second Senator. My lord, long speeches
Are frivolous here when dangers are so near us;
We all know your interest in that lady,
The world talks loud on't.
Anto. Verily, I have done,
I say no more.
Duke. But since he has declared
Himself concerned, pray, captain, take great caution
To treat the fair one as becomes her character,
And let her bed-chamber be searched with decency.
You, Jaffeir, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.
Jaff. Would the chains of death
Had bound me fast ere I had known this minute.
I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones:
The history of my wickedness shall run
Down through the low traditions of the vulgar,
And boys be taught to tell the tale of Jaffeir.
Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.
Jaff. Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me,
Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee!
[*Exit guarded.*

Noise without:

More traitors; room, room, make room there.
Duke. How's this? guards!
Where are our guards? Shut up the gates, the treason's
Already at our doors.

Enter Officer.

Offic. My lords, more traitors:
Seized in the very act of consultation;
Furnished with arms and instruments of mischief.
Bring in the prisoners.

Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, *and other Conspirators, in fetters, guarded.*

Pierr. You, my lords and fathers
(As you are pleased to call yourselves) of Venice;
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often labored in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumph ye bestow
On those that bring you conquests home and honors?
Duke. Go on: you shall be heard, sir.
Anto. And be hanged too, I hope.
Pierr. Are these the trophies I've deserved for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers?
When winds and seas conspired to overthrow you,
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbors:
When you, great Duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, the Adriatic, ploughed
Like a lewd whore by bolder prows than yours,
Stepped not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians,
The task of honor and the way to greatness,
Rais'd you from your capitulating fears
To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace?
And this my recompense? If I'm a traitor
Produce my charge; or show the wretch that's base enough
And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.
Duke. Know you one Jaffeir?
[*All the Conspirators murmur.*
Pierr. Yes, and know his virtue,
His justice, truth; his general worth and sufferings
From a hard father taught me first to love him.

Enter Jaffeir *guarded.*

Duke. See him brought forth.
Pierr. My friend too bound! nay then
Our fate has conquered us, and we must fall.
Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine
They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants, Jaffeir,
Call us all traitors: art thou one, my brother?
Jaff. To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave
That e'er betrayed a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honor to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes which morning was to have crowned
Has this curst tongue o'erthrown.
Pierr. So, then, all's over;
Venice has lost her freedom; I my life;
No more; farewell.
Duke. Say, will you make confession
Of your vile deeds and trust the Senate's mercy?
Pierr. Curst be your Senate; curst your constitution;
The curse of growing factions and division
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear,
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me!
Duke. Pardon or death?
Pierr. Death, honorable death!
Ren. Death's the best thing we ask or you can give.
All Conspir. No shameful bonds, but honorable death.
Duke. Break up the council: captain, guard your prisoners.
Jaffeir, you are free, but these must wait for judgment. [*Exeunt all the Senators.*
Pierr. Come, where's my dungeon? lead me to my straw:
It will not be the first time I've lodged hard
To do your Senate service.
Jaff. Hold one moment.
Pierr. Who's he disputes the judgment of the Senate?
Presumptuous rebel—on——
[*Strikes* Jaffeir.
Jaff. By Heaven, you stir not.
I must be heard, I must have leave to speak;
Thou hast disgraced me, Pierre, by a vile blow:
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries;
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
With pity and with charity behold me;
Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance,
But as there dwells a god-like nature in thee
Listen with mildness to my supplications.
Pierr. What whining monk art thou? what holy cheat,
That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears
And cant'st thus vilely? Hence. I know thee not.
Dissemble and be nasty: leave me, hypocrite.
Jaff. Not know me, Pierre?
Pierr. No, I know thee not: what art thou?
Jaff. Jaffeir, thy friend, thy once loved, valued friend!
Though now deservedly scorned, and used most hardly.
Pierr. Thou Jaffeir! Thou my once loved valued friend?
By Heavens, thou liest; the man so-called, my friend,
Was generous, honest, faithful, just and valiant,
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely,
Dear to my eyes and tender to my heart:
But thou a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
Poor even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect,
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Prithee avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my nature's chilled at.
Jaff. I have not wronged thee, by these tears I have not.
But still am honest, true, and hope too, valiant;
My mind still full of thee, therefore still noble;
Let not thy eyes then shun me, nor thy heart
Detest me utterly: oh, look upon me,
Look back and see my sad, sincere submission!
How my heart swells, as even 'twould burst my bosom;
Fond of its goal, and laboring to be at thee!
What shall I do? what say to make thee hear me?
Pierr. Hast thou not wronged me? dar'st thou call thyself
Jaffeir, that once loved, valued friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wronged me? Whence these chains?
Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
Whence this dishonor, but from thee, thou false one?
Jaff. All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.
Pierr. What's that?

Jaff. To take thy life on such conditions
The Council have proposed: thou and thy friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.
Pierr. Life! ask my life! confess! record myself
A villain for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this cursed city
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burthensome to itself a few years longer,
To lose it, may be, at last in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art!
No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't.
Jaff. By all that's just——
Pierr. Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.
Jaff. Then by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee,
Till to thyself at least thou'rt reconciled,
However thy resentment deal with me.
Pierr. Not leave me!
Jaff. No, thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave,
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head: I'll bear it all with patience,
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty,
Lie at thy feet and kiss 'em, though they spurn me,
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.
Pierr. Art thou not——
Jaff. What?
Pierr. A traitor?
Jaff. Yes.
Pierr. A villain?
Jaff. Granted.
Pierr. A coward, a most scandalous coward,
Spiritless, void of honor, one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life?
Jaff. All, all, and more, much more: my faults are numberless.
Pierr. And wouldst thou have me live on terms like thine?
Base as thou art false——
Jaff. No, 'tis to me that's granted.
The safety of thy life was all I aimed at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.
Pierr. I scorn it more because preserved by thee.
And as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Relieved thy wants, and raised thee from thy state
Of wretchedness in which thy fate had plunged thee,
To rank thee in my list of noble friends;
All I received in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths; and this, this dagger,
Given with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n,
So I restore it back to thee again,
Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this curst hour to hold communion,
Friendship or interest with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewell—for now I owe thee nothing.
Jaff. Say thou wilt live, then.
Pierr. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tired with.
Jaff. O Pierre!
Pierr. No more.
Jaff. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ache with gazing.
Pierr. Leave me—nay, then, thus, thus, I throw thee from me,
And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee.
Jaff. Amen. He's gone, my father, friend, preserver,
And here's the portion he has left me.
[*Holds the dagger up.*
This dagger, well remembered, with this dagger
I gave a solemn vow of dire importance,
Parted with this and Belvidera together;
Have a care, memory, drive that thought no farther;
No, I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy,
Treasure it up within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That when they meet, they start not from each other.
So; now for thinking: a blow, called traitor, villain,
Coward, dishonorable coward, faugh!
O for a long sound sleep, and so forget it!
Down, busy devil—

Enter Belvidera.

Belv. Whither shall I fly?
Where hide me and my miseries together?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted?
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation!
Not daring to look up to that dear face
Which used to smile even on my faults, but down
Bending these miserable eyes to earth,

Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.
Jaff. "Mercy," kind Heaven has surely endless stores
Hoarded for thee of blessings yet untasted;
Let wretches loaded hard with guilt as I am,
Bow [with] the weight and groan beneath the burthen,
Creep with a remnant of that strength they've left,
Before the footstool of that Heaven they've injured.
O Belvidera! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawled on earth; now if thou hast virtue, help me,
Take me into thy arms, and speak the words of peace
To my divided soul, that wars within me,
And raises every sense to my confusion;
By Heaven, I'm tottering on the very brink
Of peace; and thou art all the hold I've left.
Belv. Alas! I know thy sorrows are most mighty;
I know thou'st cause to mourn; to mourn, my Jaffeir,
With endless cries, and never-ceasing wailings,
Thou'st lost——
Jaff. Oh, I have lost what can't be counted;
My friend too, Belvidera, that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoiced in,
Has used me like a slave; shamefully used me;
'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.
What shall I do? resentment, indignation,
Love, pity, fear and memory, how I've wronged him,
Distract my quiet with the very thought on't,
And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.
Belv. What has he done?
Jaff. Thou'dst hate me, should I tell thee.
Belv. Why?
Jaff. Oh, he has used me! yet, by Heaven, I bear it:
He has used me, Belvidera, but first swear
That when I've told thee, thou'lt not loathe me utterly,
Though vilest blots and stains appear upon me;
But still at least with charitable goodness,
Be near me in the pangs of my affliction,
Not scorn me, Belvidera, as he has done.
Belv. Have I then e'er been false that now I'm doubted?
Speak, what's the cause I'm grown into distrust,
Why thought unfit to hear my love's complaining?
Jaff. Oh!
Belv. Tell me.
Jaff. Bear my failings, for they are many.
O my dear angel! in that friend I've lost
All my soul's peace; for every thought of him
Strikes my sense hard, and deads it in my brains;
Wouldst thou believe it?
Belv. Speak.
Jaff. Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,
With eyes o'erflowing and a bleeding heart,
Humbling myself almost beneath my nature,
As at his feet I kneeled, and sued for mercy,
Forgetting all our friendship, all the dearness,
In which we've lived so many years together,
With a reproachful hand, he dashed a blow.
He struck me, Belvidera, by Heaven, he struck me,
Buffeted, called me traitor, villain, coward.
Am I a coward? am I a villain? tell me:
Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so.
Damnation: coward!
Belv. Oh! forgive him, Jaffeir.
And if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow?
Jaff. Hah!
Belv. To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretched in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death,
His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain;
What will thy heart do then? Oh, sure 'twill stream
Like my eyes now.
Jaff. What means thy dreadful story?
Death, and to-morrow! broken limbs and bowels!
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain!
By all my fears I shall start out to madness,
With barely guessing, if the truth's hid longer.
Belv. The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed it:
They say according to our friends' request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage:
Declare their promised mercy all as forfeited,
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession;
Warrants are passed for public death to-morrow.
Jaff. Death! doomed to die! condemned unheard! unpleaded!
Belv. Nay, cruellest racks and torments are preparing,
To force confessions from their dying pangs.
Oh, do not look so terribly upon me,
How your lips shake, and all your face disordered!

What means my love?
Jaff. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me—strong temptations
Wake in my heart.
Belv. For what?
Jaff. No more, but leave me.
Belv. Why?
Jaff. Oh! by Heaven, I love thee with that fondness
I would not have thee stay a moment longer,
Near these curst hands; are they not cold upon thee?
[*Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom and puts it back again.*
Belv. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
To lean thus on thy breast is softer ease
Than downy pillows decked with leaves of roses.
Jaff. Alas! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis filled with:
Fly ere they gall thee: there's a lurking serpent,
Ready to leap and sting thee to thy heart;
Art thou not terrified?
Belv. No.
Jaff. Call to mind,
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought me.
Belv. Hah!
Jaff. Where's my friend? my friend, thou smiling mischief?
Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late, thou shouldst have fled
When thy guilt first had cause, for dire revenge
Is up and raging for my friend. He groans,
Hark how he groans, his screams are in my ears
Already; see, they've fixed him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murther! perjured Senate!
Murther—Oh!—hark thee, traitress, thou hast done this: [*Fumbling for his dagger.*
Thanks to thy tears and false persuading love.
How her eyes speak! O thou bewitching creature!
Madness cannot hurt thee: come, thou little trembler,
Creep, even into my heart, and there lie safe:
'Tis thy own citadel—ha!—yet stand off,
Heaven must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy;
I'll wink and then 'tis done——
Belv. What means the lord
Of me, my life and love? what's in thy bosom,
[*Draws the dagger, offers to stab her.*
Thou grasp'st at so? Nay, why am I thus treated?
What wilt thou do? Ah! do not kill me, Jaffeir,
Pity these panting breasts, and trembling limbs,
That used to clasp thee when thy looks were milder,
That yet hang heavy on my unpurged soul,
And plunge it not into eternal darkness.
Jaff. No, Belvidera, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee as in trust
To be thy portion, if I e'er proved false.
On such condition was my truth believed:
But now 'tis forfeited and must be paid for.
[*Offers to stab her again.*
Belv. [*kneeling*]. Oh, mercy!
Jaff. Nay, no struggling.
Belv. Now, then, kill me.
[*Leaps upon his neck and kisses him.*
While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,
Kiss thy revengeful lips and die in joys
Greater than any I can guess hereafter.
Jaff. I am, I am a coward; witness it, Heaven,
Witness it, earth, and every being witness;
'Tis but one blow; yet, by immortal love,
I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee;
[*He throws away the dagger and embraces her.*
The seal of Providence is sure upon thee,
And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders:
Oh, thou wert either born to save or damn me!
By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
By the victorious love that still waits on thee,
Fly to thy cruel father: save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever:
Fall at his feet, cling round his reverend knees;
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him;
Crush him in thy arms, and torture him with thy softness:
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast vanquished me. [*Exeunt ambo.*

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter PRIULI, *solus.*

Priu. Why, cruel Heaven, have my unhappy days
Been lengthened to this sad one? Oh, dishonor
And deathless infamy is fall'n upon me!

Was it my fault? Am I a traitor? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter, wedded;
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seized upon my memory,
To make it rot and stink to after ages.
Curst be the fatal minute when I got her;
Or would that I'd been anything but man,
And raised an issue which would ne'er have wronged me.
The miserablest creatures (man excepted)
Are not the less esteemed, though their posterity
Degenerate from the virtues of their fathers;
The vilest beasts are happy in their offsprings,
While only man gets traitors, whores and villains.
Curst be the names, and some swift blow from fate
Lay his head deep, where mine may be forgotten.

Enter Belvidera *in a long mourning veil.*

Belv. He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
That, for three years, has left an only child
Exposed to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin—oh!——
Priu. What child of sorrow
Art thou that com'st thus wrapt in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were towards a grave?
Belv. A wretch, who from the very top of happiness
Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.
Priu. Indeed thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted sorrows;
Would I could help thee!
Belv. 'Tis greatly in your power.
The world, too, speaks you charitable, and I,
Who ne'er asked alms before, in that dear hope
Am come a-begging to you, sir.
Priu. For what?
Belv. O well regard me, is this voice a strange one?
Consider, too, when beggars once pretend
A case like mine, no little will content 'em.
Priu. What wouldst thou beg for?
Belv. Pity and forgiveness.
[*Throws up her veil.*
By the kind tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints and take me to your love.
Priu. My daughter?
Belv. Yes, your daughter, by a mother
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honor,
Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,
Dear to your arms: by all the joys she gave you,
When in her blooming years she was your treasure,
Look kindly on me; in my face behold
The lineaments of hers you've kissed so often,
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.
Priu. Thou art my daughter?
Belv. Yes—and you've oft told me,
With smiles of love and chaste paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.
Priu. Oh!
Hadst thou inherited her matchless virtues,
I'd been too bless'd.
Belv. Nay, do not call to memory
My disobedience, but let pity enter
Into your heart, and quite deface the impression;
For could you think how mine's perplexed, what sadness,
Fears and despairs distract the peace within me,
Oh, you would take me in your dear, dear arms,
Hover with strong compassion o'er your young one,
To shelter me with a protecting wing,
From the black gathered storm, that's just, just breaking.
Priu. Don't talk thus.
Belv. Yes, I must, and you must hear too.
I have a husband.
Priu. Damn him!
Belv. Oh, do not curse him!
He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any terms, howe'er he deal with me.
Priu. Ha! what means my child?
Belv. Oh, there's but this short moment
'Twixt me and fate, yet send me not with curses
Down to my grave, afford me one kind blessing
Before we part: just take me in your arms,
And recommend me with a prayer to Heaven,
That I may die in peace, and when I'm dead——
Priu. How my soul's catched!
Belv. Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear ashes of my tender mother.
She would have pitied me, had fate yet spared her.
Priu. By Heaven, my aching heart forebodes much mischief;
Tell me thy story, for I'm still thy father.
Belv. No, I'm contented.
Priu. Speak.
Belv. No matter.
Priu. Tell me.

By yon blest Heaven, my heart runs o'er with fondness.
Belv. Oh!
Priu. Utter it.
Belv. O my husband, my dear husband
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.
Priu. Kill thee?
Belv. Yes, kill me. When he passed his faith
And convenant, against your state and Senate,
He gave me up as hostage for his truth,
With me a dagger and a dire commission,
Whene'er he failed, to plunge it through this bosom.
I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
To attempt his heart, and bring it back to honor.
Great love prevailed and blessed me with success:
He came, confessed, betrayed his dearest friends
For promised mercy; now they're doomed to suffer,
Galled with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows to appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood the atonement.
Priu. Heavens!
Belv. Think you saw what passed at our last parting;
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,
Pacing the earth and tearing up his steps,
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning fury; think you saw his one hand
Fixed on my throat, while the extended other
Grasped a keen threatening dagger: oh, 'twas thus
We last embraced, when, trembling with revenge,
He dragged me to the ground, and at my bosom
Presented horrid death, cried out: "My friends,
Where are my friends?" swore, wept, raged, threatened, loved,
For he yet loved, and that dear love preserved me,
To this last trial of a father's pity.
I fear not death, but cannot bear a thought
That that dear hand should do the unfriendly office;
If I was ever then your care, now hear me;
Fly to the Senate, save the promised lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.
Priu. O my heart's comfort!
Belv. Will you not, my father?
Weep not, but answer me.
Priu. By Heaven, I will.
Not one of 'em but what shall be immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past,
I'll henceforth be indeed a father; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,
Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee.
Peace to thy heart. Farewell.
Belv. Go, and remember
'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for.
[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Anto. Hum, hum, ha, Signior Priuli, my lord Priuli, my lord, my lord, my lord: [how] we lords love to call one another by our titles! My lord, my lord, my lord—pox on him, I am a lord as well as he; and so let him fiddle—I'll warrant him he's gone to the Senate-house, and I'll be there too, soon enough for somebody. 'Od, here's a tickling speech about the plot, I'll prove there's a plot with a vengeance—would I had it without book; let me see—
"Most reverend Senators,
That there is a plot, surely by this time, no man that hath eyes or understanding in his head will presume to doubt, 'tis as plain as the light in the cucumber"—no—hold there—cucumber does not come in yet—"'tis as plain as the light in the sun, or as the man in the moon, even at noon day; it is indeed a pumpkin-plot, which, just as it was mellow, we have gathered, and now we have gathered it, prepared and dressed it, shall we throw it like a pickled cucumber out at the window? no: that it is not only a bloody, horrid, execrable, damnable and audacious plot, but it is, as I may so say, a saucy plot: and we all know, most reverend fathers, that what is sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander: therefore, I say, as those bloodthirsty ganders of the conspiracy would have destroyed us geese of the Senate, let us make haste to destroy them, so I humbly move for hanging"—ha! hurry durry—I think this will do; though I was something out, at first, about the sun and the cucumber.

Enter AQUILINA.

Aquil. Good-morrow, senator.
Anto. Nacky, my dear Nacky, morrow, Nacky, 'od I am very brisk, very merry, very pert, very jovial—ha-a-a-a-a—kiss me, Nacky; how dost thou do, my little Tory, rory strumpet, kiss me, I say, hussy, kiss me.
Aquil. Kiss me, Nacky, hang you, sir, coxcomb, hang you, sir.
Anto. Hayty, tayty, is it so indeed, with all my heart, faith—*hey then up go we,* faith—*hey then up go we,* dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*
Aquil. Signior.

Anto. Madonna.
Aquil. Do you intend to die in your bed?——
Anto. About threescore years hence, much may be done, my dear.
Aquil. You'll be hanged, signior.
Anto. Hanged, sweetheart, prithee be quiet, hanged quotha, that's a merry conceit, with all my heart, why thou jokest, Nacky, thou art given to joking, I'll swear; well, I protest, Nacky, nay, I must protest, and will protest that I love joking dearly, man. And I love thee for joking, and I'll kiss thee for joking, and towse thee for joking, and 'od, I have a devilish mind to take thee aside about that business for joking too, 'od I have, and *Hey then up go we,* dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*
Aquil. [*draws a dagger*]. See you this, sir?
Anto. O laud, a dagger! O laud! it is naturally my aversion, I cannot endure the sight on't, hide it for Heaven's sake, I cannot look that way till it be gone—hide it, hide it, oh, oh, hide it!
Aquil. Yes, in your heart I'll hide it.
Anto. My heart; what, hide a dagger in my heart's blood?
Aquil. Yes, in thy heart, thy throat, thou pampered devil;
Thou hast helped to spoil my peace, and I'll have vengeance
On thy curst life, for all the bloody Senate,
The perjured faithless Senate: where's my lord,
My happiness, my love, my god, my hero,
Doomed by thy accursed tongue, amongst the rest,
To a shameful wrack? By all the rage that's in me
I'll be whole years in murthering thee.
Anto. Why, Nacky, wherefore so passionate? what have I done? what's the matter, my dear Nacky? am not I thy love, thy happiness, thy lord, thy hero, thy senator, and everything in the world, Nacky?
Aquil. Thou! think'st thou, thou art fit to meet my joys;
To bear the eager clasps of my embraces?
Give me my Pierre, or——
Anto. Why, he's to be hanged, little Nacky,
Trussed up for treason, and so forth, child.
Aquil. Thou liest: stop down thy throat that hellish sentence,
Or 'tis thy last: swear that my love shall live,
Or thou art dead.
Anto. Ah-h-h-h.
Aquil. Swear to recall his doom,
Swear at my feet, and tremble at my fury.
Anto. I do. Now if she would but kick a little bit, one kick now.
Ah-h-h-h.
Aquil. Swear, or——
Anto. I do, by these dear fragrant foots
And little toes sweet as, e-e-e-e my Nacky, Nacky, Nacky.
Aquil. How!
Anto. Nothing but untie thy shoe-string a little, faith and troth,
That's all, that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's all.
Aquil. Nay, then——
Anto. Hold, hold, thy love, thy lord, thy hero
Shall be preserved and safe.
Aquil. Or may this poniard Rust in thy heart.
Anto. With all my soul.
Aquil. Farewell——
[*Exit* AQUILINA.
Anto. Adieu. Why, what a bloody-minded, inveterate, termagant strumpet have I been plagued with! Oh-h-h yet more! nay then I die, I die—I am dead already.
[*Stretches himself out.*

SCENE II

Enter JAFFEIR.

Jaff. Final destruction seize on all the world:
Bend down, ye Heavens, and shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion;
Scorch it, with elemental flames, to one curst cinder,
And all us little creepers in't, called men,
Burn, burn to nothing: but let Venice burn
Hotter than all the rest: here kindle hell
Ne'er to extinguish, and let souls hereafter
Groan here, in all those pains which mine feels now!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Belv. [*meeting him*]. My life——
Jaff. [*turning from her*]. My plague——
Belv. Nay then I see my ruin,
If I must die!
Jaff. No, Death's this day too busy,
Thy father's ill-timed mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy labors though and him too,
But all my poor betrayed unhappy friends
Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour;
And yet I live.
Belv. Then be the next my doom.
I see thou'st passed my sentence in thy heart,
And I'll no longer weep or plead against it,
But with the humblest, most obedient patience
Meet thy dear hands, and kiss 'em when they wound me;
Indeed I'm willing, but I beg thee do it

With some remorse, and where thou giv'st the blow,
View me with eyes of a relenting love,
And show me pity, for 'twill sweeten justice.
Jaff. Show pity to thee?
Belv. Yes, and when thy hands,
Charged with my fate, come trembling to the deed,
As thou hast done a thousand thousand dear times,
To this poor breast, when kinder rage has brought thee,
When our stinged hearts have leaped to meet each other,
And melting kisses sealed our lips together,
When joys have left me gasping in thy arms,
So let my death come now, and I'll not shrink from't.
Jaff. Nay, Belvidera, do not fear my cruelty,
Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy,
But answer me to what I shall demand
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.
Belv. I will when I've done weeping——
Jaff. Fie, no more on't—
How long is't since the miserable day
We wedded first——
Belv. Oh-h-h!
Jaff. Nay, keep in thy tears
Lest they unman me too.
Belv. Heaven knows I cannot;
The words you utter sound so very sadly
These streams will follow——
Jaff. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry, then.
Belv. But was't a miserable day?
Jaff. A curst one.
Belv. I thought it otherwise, and you've oft sworn
In the transporting hours of warmest love
When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn you blessed it.
Jaff. 'Twas a rash oath.
Belv. Then why am I not curst too?
Jaff. No, Belvidera; by the eternal truth,
I dote with too much fondness.
Belv. Still so kind?
Still then do you love me?
Jaff. Nature, in her workings,
Inclines not with more ardor to creation,
Than I do now towards thee: man ne'er was blessed,
Since the first pair first met, as I have been.
Belv. Then sure you will not curse me.
Jaff. No, I'll bless thee.
I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.
'Tis now, I think, three years we've lived together.
Belv. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till, reverend grown, for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together,
There sleep in peace till an eternal morning.
Jaff. [*sighing*]. When will that be?
Belv. I hope long ages hence.
Jaff. Have I not hitherto (I beg thee tell me
Thy very fears) used thee with tenderest love?
Did e'er my soul rise up in wrath against thee?
Did e'er I frown when Belvidera smiled,
Or, by the least unfriendly word, betray
A bating passion? have I ever wronged thee?
Belv. No.
Jaff. Has my heart, or have my eyes e'er wandered
To any other woman?
Belv. Never, never—
I were the worst of false ones should I accuse thee;
I own I've been too happy, blessed above
My sex's charter.
Jaff. Did I not say I came to bless thee?
Belv. Yes.
Jaff. Then hear me, bounteous Heaven!
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing.
With a continual giving hand, let peace,
Honor, and safety always hover round her:
Feed her with plenty, let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning:
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
Harmless as her own thoughts, and prop her virtue,
To bear the loss of one that too much loved,
And comfort her with patience in our parting.
Belv. How, parting! parting!
Jaff. Yes, for ever parting.
I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon Heaven,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever.
Belv. Oh, call back
Your cruel blessings, stay with me and curse me!
Jaff. No, 'tis resolved.
Belv. Then hear me too, just Heaven!
Pour down your curses on this wretched head
With never-ceasing vengeance: let despair,
Danger or infamy, nay, all surround me;
Starve me with wantings; let my eyes ne'er see
A sight of comfort, nor my heart know peace,
But dash my days with sorrow, nights with horrors
Wild as my own thoughts now, and let loose fury
To make me mad enough for what I lose,
If I must lose him. If I must! I will not.—

O turn and hear me!
Jaff. Now hold, heart, or never!
Belv. By all the tender days we've lived together,
By all our charming nights, and joys that crowned 'em:
Pity my sad condition, speak, but speak.
Jaff. Oh-h-h!
Belv. By these arms that now cling round thy neck:
By this dear kiss and by ten thousand more,
By these poor streaming eyes——
Jaff. Murther! unhold me:
[*Draws his dagger.*
By the immortal destiny that doomed me
To this curst minute, I'll not live one longer.
Resolve to let me go or see me fall——
Belv. Hold, sir, be patient.
Jaff. Hark, the dismal bell
[*Passing bell tolls.*
Tolls out for death; I must attend its call too,
For my poor friend, my dying Pierre expects me:
He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he died, and take his last forgiveness.
Farewell for ever.
[*Going out looks back at her.*
Belv. Leave thy dagger with me.
Bequeath me something.—Not one kiss at parting?
O my poor heart, when wilt thou break?
Jaff. Yet stay,
We have a child, as yet a tender infant.
Be a kind mother to him when I am gone:
Breed him in virtue and the paths of honor,
But let him never know his father's story:
I charge thee guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune or his name.
Now—nearer yet— [*Approaching each other.*
O that my arms were riveted
Thus round thee ever! But my friends, my oath!
This and no more. [*Kisses her.*
Belv. Another, sure another,
For that poor little one you've ta'en care of,
I'll give 't him truly.
Jaff. So, now farewell.
Belv. For ever?
Jaff. Heaven knows for ever; all good angels guard thee. [*Exit.*
Belv. All ill ones sure had charge of me this moment.
Curst be my days, and doubly curst my nights,
Which I must now mourn out in widowed tears;
Blasted be every herb and fruit and tree;
Curst be the rain that falls upon the earth.
And may the general curse reach man and beast;
Oh, give me daggers, fire or water!
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the waves
Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,
Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
Oh, there's all quiet, here all rage and fury:
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain:
I long for thick substantial sleep: hell, hell,
Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am.

Enter Priuli *and Servants.*

Who's there?
Priu. Run, seize and bring her safely home. [*They seize her.*
Guard her as you would life: alas, poor creature!
Belv. What? to my husband then conduct me quickly.
Are all things ready? shall we die most gloriously?
Say not a word of this to my old father.
Murmuring streams, soft shades, and springing flowers,
Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber. [*Exit.*

Scene III

Scene opening discovers a Scaffold and a Wheel prepared for the executing of Pierre, *then enter other Officers,* Pierre *and Guards, a Friar, Executioner, and a great rabble.*

Offic. Room, room there—stand all by, make room for the prisoner.
Pierr. My friend not come yet?
Father. Why are you so obstinate?
Pierr. Why you so troublesome, that a poor wretch
Can't die in peace,
But you, like ravens, will be croaking round him?
Fath. Yet, Heaven——
Pierr. I tell thee Heaven and I are friends.
I ne'er broke peace with it yet, by cruel murthers,
Rapine or perjury, or vile deceiving,
But lived in moral justice towards all men,
Nor am a foe to the most strong believers,
Howe'er my own short-sighted faith confine me.
Fath. But an all-seeing Judge——
Pierr. You say my conscience
Must be mine accuser: I've searched that conscience,
And find no records there of crimes that scare me.
Fath. 'Tis strange you should want faith.
Pierr. You want to lead
My reason blindfold, like a hampered lion,

Checked of its nobler vigor; then, when baited
Down to obedient tameness, make it couch,
And show strange tricks, which you call signs of faith.
So silly souls are gulled and you get money.
Away, no more! Captain, I would hereafter
This fellow write no lies of my conversion,
Because he has crept upon my troubled hours.

Enter JAFFEIR.

Jaff. Hold: eyes, be dry! Heart, strengthen me to bear
This hideous sight, and humble me, to take
The last forgiveness of a dying friend,
Betrayed by my vile falsehood, to his ruin.
O Pierre!
Pierr. Yet nearer.
Jaff. Crawling on my knees,
And prostrate on the earth, let me approach thee.
How shall I look up to thy injured face,
That always used to smile, with friendship on me?
It darts an air of so much manly virtue,
That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
And stripes are fitter for me than embraces.
Pierr. Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
I cannot forget to love thee: prithee, Jaffeir,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I am now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.
Jaff. Good! I am the vilest creature; worse than e'er
Suffered the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.
Why was I sent for to be used thus kindly?
Call, call me villain, as I am, describe
The foul complexion of my hateful deeds,
Lead me to the rack, and stretch me in thy stead,
I've crimes enough to give it its full load,
And do it credit. Thou wilt but spoil the use on't,
And honest men hereafter bear its figure
About 'em, as a charm from treacherous friendship.
Offic. The time grows short, your friends are dead already.
Jaff. Dead!
Pierr. Yes, dead, Jaffeir; they've all died like men too,
Worthy their character.
Jaff. And what must I do?
Pierr. O Jaffeir!
Jaff. Speak aloud thy burthened soul
And tell thy troubles to thy tortured friend.
Pierr. Couldst thou yet be a friend, a generous friend,
I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heaven knows I want a friend.
Jaff. And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.
Pierr. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffeir.
Jaff. Yes, I'll live,
But it shall be to see thy fall revenged
At such a rate, as Venice long shall groan for.
Pierr. Wilt thou?
Jaff. I will, by Heav'n.
Pierr. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee, oh—yet—shall I trust thee?
Jaff. No: I've been false already.
Pierr. Dost thou love me?
Jaff. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.
Pierr. [*he weeps*]. Curse on this weakness.
Jaff. Tears! Amazement! Tears!
I never saw thee melted thus before,
And know there's something laboring in thy bosom
That must have vent: though I'm a villain, tell me.
Pierr. [*pointing to the wheel*]. Seest thou that engine?
Jaff. Why?
Pierr. Is't fit a soldier, who has lived with honor,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crowned with conquest,
Be exposed a common carcase on a wheel?
Jaff. Ha!
Pierr. Speak! is't fitting?
Jaff. Fitting?
Pierr. Yes, is't fitting?
Jaff. What's to be done?
Pierr. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attaint it.
Offic. The day grows late, sir.
Pierr. I'll make haste! O Jaffeir,
Though thou'st betrayed me, do me some way justice.
Jaff. No more of that: thy wishes shall be satisfied.
I have a wife, and she shall bleed, my child too
Yield up his little throat, and all to appease thee—— [*Going away,* PIERRE *holds him.*
Pierr. No—this—no more!
[*He whispers* JAFFEIR.
Jaff. Ha! is't then so?
Pierr. Most certainly.
Jaff. I'll do't.
Pierr. Remember.

Offic. Sir.
Pierr. Come, now I'm ready.
[*He and* Jaffeir *ascend the scaffold.*
Captain, you should be a gentleman of honor.
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate and die with decency.
Come!
[*Takes off his gown.* Executioner *prepares to bind him.*
Fath. Son!
Pierr. Hence, tempter.
Offic. Stand off, priest.
Pierr. I thank you, sir.
You'll think on't.
[*To* Jaffeir.
Jaff. 'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow.
Pierr. Now, Jaffeir! now I am going.
Now;— [Executioner *having bound him.*
Jaff. Have at thee,
Thou honest heart, then—here— [*Stabs him.*
And this is well too. [*Then stabs himself.*
Fath. Damnable deed!
Pierr. Now thou hast indeed been faithful.
This was done nobly—we've deceived the Senate.
Jaff. Bravely.
Pierr. Ha! ha! ha!—oh! oh!— [*Dies.*
Jaff. Now, ye curst rulers,
Thus of the blood ye've shed I make libation,
And sprinkle it mingling: may it rest upon you,
And all your race: be henceforth peace a stranger
Within your walls; let plagues and famine waste
Your generations—O poor Belvidera!
Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her,—
A token that with my dying breath I blessed her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.
I'm sick—I'm quiet— [Jaffeir *dies.*
Offic. Bear this news to the Senate,
And guard their bodies till there's farther order:
Heaven grant I die so well!
[*Scene shuts upon them.*

Scene IV

Soft music. Enter Belvidera *distracted, led by two of her* Women, Priuli *and* Servants.

Priu. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying Heaven.
Belv. Come, come, come, come, come, nay, come to bed!
Prithee, my love. The winds! hark how they whistle!
And the rain beats: oh, how the weather shrinks me!
You are angry now, who cares? pish, no indeed.
Choose then; I say you shall not go, you shall not;
Whip your ill nature; get you gone then! oh,
[Jaffeir's *Ghost rises.*
Are you return'd? See, father, here he's come again!
Am I to blame to love him? O thou dear one! [Ghost *sinks.*
Why do you fly me? Are you angry still, then?
Jaffeir! where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here somewhere.
Stand off, I say! what, gone? remember it, tyrant!
I may revenge myself for this trick one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't! Renault's a nasty fellow.
Hang him, hang him, hang him.

Enter Officer and others.

Priu. News, what news?
[*Officer whispers* Priuli.
Offic. Most sad, sir.
Jaffeir, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabbed Pierre, and next himself:
Both fell together.
[*The ghosts of* Jaffeir *and* Pierre *rise together both bloody.*
Priu. Daughter.
Belv. Ha, look there!
My husband bloody, and his friend too! Murther!
Who has done this? Speak to me, thou sad vision, [Ghosts *sink.*
On these poor trembling knees I beg it.
Vanished!
Here they went down; oh, I'll dig, dig the den up.
You shan't delude me thus. Ho, Jaffeir, Jaffeir,
Peep up and give me but a look. I have him!
I've got him, father: oh, how I'll smuggle him!
My love! my dear! my blessing! help me, help me!
They've hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell—
[*She dies.*
Maid. She's dead,
Breathless and dead.
Priu. Then guard me from the sight on't;
Lead me into some place that's fit for mourning;
Where the free air, light, and the cheerful sun
May never enter: hang it round with black:
Set up one taper that may last a day
As long as I've to live: and there all leave me,
Sparing no tears when you this tale relate,
But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.
[*Curtain falls. Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE

The text is done, and now for application,
And when that's ended, pass your approbation.
Though the conspiracy's prevented here,
Methinks I see another hatching there;
And there's a certain faction fain would sway,
If they had strength enough, and damn this play,
But this the author bade me boldly say:
If any take his plainness in ill part,
He's glad on't from the bottom of his heart;
Poets in honor of the truth should write,
With the same spirit brave men for it fight;
And though against him causeless hatreds rise,
And daily where he goes of late, he spies
The scowls of sullen and revengeful eyes;
'Tis what he knows with much contempt to bear,
And serves a cause too good to let him fear:
He fears no poison from an incensed drab,
No ruffian's five-foot sword, nor rascal's stab;
Nor any other snares of mischief laid,
Not a Rose-alley cudgel-ambuscade,
From any private cause where malice reigns,
Or general pique all blockheads have to brains:
Nothing shall daunt his pen when truth does call,
No, not the picture-mangler at Guildhall.
The rebel tribe, of which that vermin's one,
Have now set forward and their course begun;
And while that Prince's figure they deface,
As they before had massacred his name,
Durst their base fears but look him in the face,
They'd use his person as they've used his fame;
A face, in which such lineaments they read
Of that great martyr's, whose rich blood they shed,
That their rebellious hate they still retain,
And in his son would murther him again.
With indignation then, let each brave heart
Rouse and unite to take his injured part;
Till royal love and goodness call him home,
And songs of triumph meet him as he come;
Till Heaven his honor and our peace restore,
And villains never wrong his virtue more.

COLLEY CIBBER

LOVE'S LAST SHIFT

The average reader of literature knows Colley Cibber rather through fiction than through fact. In the later edition of Pope's *Dunciad* (1742) the vigorous and versatile old laureate, sworn enemy to dullness, is incongruously exalted to the bad eminence of King of Dunces. In Charles Reade's pleasant story of *Peg Woffington* a century later, the genial chronicler of the theatre sparkles in the rôle of ancient squire of dames, sentimentally reminiscent of famous stage figures of his younger time. The present-day student of drama draws his knowledge of the distinguished actor and playwright from the comedies of his youth, and from a work of deep value and interest, the autobiography written in his old age.

The Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber points with pride to worthy parents: a father of Danish stock with deserved reputation as a sculptor, a mother of the blood of English squires and of William of Wykeham. Born in London in 1671, Colley spent five years at Grantham School, forecasting his future by his aptitude for verse, which brought no poetry from him either now or later as laureate, and by his conceit, which later waxed to "egregious vanity." At the age of nineteen he joins the united companies (King's and Duke's) at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, serving at first for scanty wage in the smallest of parts. As he grew in ability, his reputation increased so that he meets as close associate and competent critic the impersonators of many parts in the plays of the present volume, all of them seemingly supreme. Here are Betterton, "an actor without competitors," and Nokes, "an actor of quite different genius from any I have ever read of, heard of or seen since or before his time"; Mrs. Barry, gaining, in Dryden's words, "a reputation beyond any woman I have ever seen in the theatre"; Mrs. Montford (afterwards Mrs. Verbruggen), "mistress of more variety of humor than I ever knew in any one actress"; Mrs. Bracegirdle, always chosen by the most eminent authors for their favorite characters. As historian of drama, he comments on the opening of Haymarket Theatre, on spectacular stage diversions, on Italian opera, on farces, on pantomimes, and on the chief comedies and tragedies of his time. He has not a little to say of leading dramatists, of Sir John Vanbrugh and of Sir Richard Steele, both

of whom he anticipated in *Love's Last Shift,* the one in theme and characters, the other in tone and manner.

A dramatist in his teens, Cibber became a husband in his early twenties. "It may be observable, too," he says in the *Apology,* "that my muse and my spouse were equally prolific, that the one was seldom the mother of a child, but in the same year the other made me the father of a play. I think that we had a dozen of each sort between us, of both which kinds some died in their infancy and near an equal number of each were alive when I quitted the theatre." This summary is only half fair at least to the muse, for biographers count unchallenged more than a score of his dramatic pieces. Croissant in his *Studies in the Work of Colley Cibber* thus divides his undisputed plays: two farces; four operas; seven tragedies, including two adaptations from Shakespere, *Richard III* and *King John,* and three translations from Corneille; a dozen comedies that fall into two general classes: eight comedies of manner and intrigue, of which six are adaptations from French and English, and four sentimental comedies essentially original. Only these last four concern us.

It is hard to credit the first of Cibber's sentimental comedies, *Love's Last Shift,* with any high moral purpose, not only because four acts are designed for the coarse palates of men, and only the final one of Loveless' reformation for the more refined taste of ladies; but also because the author welcomed with eagerness Vanbrugh's sequel, which demonstrated the improbability of his own moral conclusion. Cibber saw and approved worse things, but followed for the nonce better things in appreciation of the possibilities of sentimental comedy. And thus facing north by south he reaped a twofold reward—that of dramatist and actor. Davies in his *Dramatic Miscellanies* tells us that "never were spectators more happy in easing their minds by uncommon and repeated plaudits. The honest tears shed by the audience conveyed a strong reproach to our licentious poets and were to Cibber the highest mark of honor." And on the other hand Vanbrugh's dramatic protest against the virtuous outcome, *The Relapse,* afforded Cibber his first great opportunity as an actor in the rôle of Lord Foppington (ennobled from his Sir Novelty) and raised his reputation through its great success.

Love's Last Shift was not, even in the opinion of its author, a great play. Cibber agrees with Congreve that "it had in it a great many things that were like wit that in reality were not wit"; but he goes beyond his critics in deeming still less pardonable "the great deal of puerility and frothy stage language in it." Yet, many years after, in 1740, he is able to say, with his eye on the box office, that "by the mere moral delight received from the fable, it has been with the other (*The Relapse*) in a continued and equal possession of the stage for more than forty years." His "moral delight," which may be taken as a synonym for "sentimentality," and his association with the greater Ajax, Vanbrugh, assured Cibber's play a long vogue.

Love's Last Shift is a play of transition, representing the passage from

the comedy of manners of the seventeenth century to the sentimental comedy of the eighteenth. In its wonted mood the comic spirit shakes off its weight of gravity and "takes an airing beyond the diocese of conscience." Then tired of liberty it folds its wings and moves with faltering steps close to a duller planet than "the lively quicksilver world" of contemporary Congreve. In 1696 Colley Cibber was a very young man and no very great artist, but he had observed with shrewd eye the changing taste of the time and of the theatre-going public. The monarchs of the decade, William and Mary—or rather Mary and William, for only the queen patronized plays—had made frequent proclamations against the acting of anything contrary to good morals or good manners. Then too the Society for the Reformation of Manners, inaugurated in 1692, had thrown its weight against the impiety and immorality of the theatre. In 1695, Sir Richard Blackmore, as Cibber tells us near the end of his first act, had won the ridicule of "coffee-critics" by his denunciation of the indecency of dramatists in the preface to his *Prince Arthur*. The shadow of Jeremy Collier was to fall across the stage in 1698, darkening its gaiety. So the wise young Colley, looking behind and before, makes the most of his sadly belated moral, and thus, despite his very indecorous story, becomes the prophet of a new school—that of sentimental comedy.

Cibber's prologue to *Love's Last Shift* makes no great profession of morality, surely not enough to frighten away the beaux from the boxes:—

> "Nor do the bad alone his colors share;
> Neglected virtue is at least shown fair;
> And that's enough o' conscience for a play."

There is surely little conscience in the returned prodigal, Loveless—lawless, graceless and, in his ruin, quite shameless, seeking, after years of dissipation, London, his old home, as "a place of uninterrupted pleasures," readily accepting the rumor that the forsaken wife of his youth is dead. Hardly more appealing is that lady, the spiritless Amanda, personification of neglected virtue, who will regain her old love in the assumed rôle of a new mistress. The language of the women, her companions, is hardly such as to turn away the wrath of the stern censors of this perverse generation. And young Worthy, the mentor of both man and wife, admits that his bride's fortune is the loadstone that attracts his heart. The morality of the first act is certainly not oppressive. With the second act enters the modish eccentric who looks back to the Courtly Nice of Crowne (1685), later one of Cibber's greatest rôles, and to Fopling Flutter of Etherege, and forward to Vanbrugh's Lord Foppington. Sir Novelty Fashion is so far inferior to the other fops that the reader is apt to forget him quite in contemplation of the delights that they so freely offer. Yet, as played by Cibber himself, the rôle and the actor both won high praise. Above the general applause is heard the commendation of George Etherege's friend, the Earl of Dorset, now Lord Chamberlain. "It was the best first play that any author in his memory had pro-

duced; and for a young fellow to show himself such an actor and such a writer in one day was something extraordinary." Then followed the even greater compliment of Vanbrugh's sequel and his continuation of Cibber in the rôle of fop. Through "folly and foppery fully dressed" Cibber had come into his own.

In playing "Fashion" of his own creation Cibber carried off the honors of the early performances. But the title-theme of *Love's Last Shift* is linked with other figures. Amanda's designs upon her unwitting husband, which are questionable, as the lady herself admits, reach a conclusion criminal in the man's intent, if not in fact. A happy offset to this unpleasing motive is the running comment of the fine gentlemen and ladies upon their neighbors, forecasting, like so much Restoration tattle and prattle, the airy persiflage of Sheridan's scandalmongers. Then comes the high-pitched revelation of Amanda's identity after the success of her ruse. Though the morality, if there be any, in the closing act is marred by the atrocious behavior of Loveless' attendant Snap, yet sentiment presides in the epithalamium and in Loveless' resolve to show during "all his life to come how he approves the moral." This assurance brings as little conviction to the reader as it brought to John Vanbrugh, whose unbelief straightway provoked the strong rebuttal contained in his greatest play, *The Relapse.* And Cibber, the actor, illustrates the perversities of the comic spirit by assisting in the refutation of Cibber, the maker of a dramatic fable. But the drama itself is a contradiction in terms. Allardyce Nicoll says: "Nothing shows better the hypocritical veneer which spreads over the age. The reformers were satisfied because virtue triumphed in the end; the pleasure-loving spectators were willing to witness the wholly artificial conversions for the sake of the careless intrigue and loose dialogue of the preceding scenes."

Jeremy Collier's lash fell lightly on the shoulders of Colley Cibber, for, according to the *Apology,* the greatest charge of the divine against his first play was that "it sometimes uses the word 'Faith!' as an oath in the dialogue." Like the old Dryden, the young dramatist recognized that "the calling our dramatic writers to this strict account had a very wholesome effect upon those who writ after his [Collier's] time." Like Dryden, he felt that "the zeal of God's house had eaten him up." He humorously suggests that "Collier's book may prove a good index for the readers of immoral literature"; and he sees clearly the weakness of an attack that does not "distinguish between what is meant for contempt, and what is meant for example. . . . The stage dares hardly show a vicious person speaking like himself for fear of being called profane for exposing him." His own position he seeks to make clear: "I cannot allow the most taking play to be intrinsically good or to be a work upon which a man of sense and probity should value himself when they do not as well *prodesse* as *delectare,* give profit with delight. The *utile dulci* was of old equally the point; and has always been my aim, however wide of the mark I may have shot my arrow." In Cibber, as in most men,

the gap between profession and practice was wide. Vanbrugh had intended to end his last play, *A Journey to London,* with the repudiation of the dissipated woman of fashion by her husband, but "Colley Cibber, in perfect health and spirits when the departed author's manuscript was laid before him, felt, in his continuation, *The Provoked Husband,* more compassion for female frailty and less zeal for the conversion of the female world than to give such a severe example, as the original author had intended to the splendid row of side boxes" (Mrs. Inchbald).

Cibber's contribution to English sentimental comedy is best illustrated by three plays of his earlier time, *Love Makes the Man* (1700), *She Would and She Would Not* (1702), and *The Careless Husband* (1704). It is in accord with the contradictions of this *genre* that our champion of "morality" builds the first of these upon two plays by John Fletcher, a dramatist noted for neither dignity nor decorum: *The Custom of the Country,* in which Dryden finds "more bawdry than in all ours together" and *The Elder Brother,* in parts of which "the sides of reputation bled." And the sentimentalist himself offers "for masks scandal and for beaux French airs." Yet, on the other hand, there are judicious omissions and discreet palliations of the older text and intrusions of rhetorical morality and sentiment that would have made the Elizabethans stare and gasp. To *She Would and She Would Not* its editor, Mrs. Inchbald, preacher of "moral utility," thus reacted: "No auditor or reader will be the wiser or the better after it; yet he may possibly be in a much better temper for the bad man may rejoice that he here finds persons as bad as himself; and the good man will certainly rejoice that he does not resemble any of them."

The Careless Husband repeats the theme of *Love's Last Shift*—the reformation of a sinner by a loving and forgiving wife. The phrase, "immoral—moral," well summarizes the story of a man of fashion who more than once offends with grande-dame and with maid and who, at the end of the play, grandiloquently confesses his faults and lays his "conquered heart" at the feet of his gracious wife: "Give them to my newborn love what happiness you please, it cannot, shall not be too kind!" And the loving creature, of course, is "distracted with this excess of goodness." Brief is the morality of the piece, but long is the recountal of the sinner's twofold infidelity. The careless husband, Sir Charles Easy, is flagrantly at fault, yet we are not supposed to question the permanence of his reform—in this instance even Vanbrugh kindly held his peace. Although comedy is thus moralized, Nettleton is right in deeming the play "rather an expurgated Restoration comedy than the new comedy type." Here are the fine gentlemen and ladies of the earlier plays. Betty Modish may be "a coquette of the school of Congreve's Millamant, but how flawed a copy of that great original! Set the flat prose of her social gospel, "I can't see a woman of spirit has any business in this world but to dress and make men like her," beside the challenging refrain of her exquisite prototype, "Lord, what is a lover that it can give!" and ask

where is the true accent of the comic stage. Even Lord Foppington, he of the long tradition, whom Cibber has reclaimed from Vanbrugh, has parted with those familiar phrases that once larded his speech. All these are faint shadows of well-remembered forms. Lady Easy plays her rôle of patient Griselda in both poetry and prose, for Cibber, like Steele, "seeks to invest the serious passages of moralized comedy with the traditional dignity of verse." Pathos and sentiment have replaced much of the joyous banter of the very elect.

Colley Cibber was one of the busiest of men. All his successful activities are closely linked with the theatre; and his unsuccessful are off-stage, for there was little poetry in this laureate of England. In his eighty-six years of life he played various parts, often two or three at once: dramatist of many talents, actor of delightful versatility, manager of keen judgment, theatrical critic of deep insight and also a most competent chronicler of stage history. With equal ease he produced plays for his fellows or performed parts for his friends. His personal relations often dictated his work. He provides at once the occasion and the inspiration of Vanbrugh's *Relapse* and also renders its best rôle. His contributions to sentimental comedy include not only plays of his own, but his admirable ending of Vanbrugh's posthumous *Journey to London* and his vaunted additions to Steele's *Conscious Lovers*. If great men were his friends, unfortunately greater were his enemies. Fielding ridiculed him in a play and Pope enthroned him in the *Dunciad* with little justice, for even Johnson, who disliked him, admitted that he was no blockhead. D'Israeli's wise comment on Cibber and his foes is often quoted: "They never suspected that a blockhead of his size could do what wiser men could not and, as a fine comic genius, command a whole province in human nature."

LOVE'S LAST SHIFT;

OR,

THE FOOL IN FASHION

PROLOGUE

By a Friend

Spoken by Mr. Verbruggen

Wit bears so thin a crop this duller age,
We're forc'd to glean it from the barren stage:
Ev'n players fledg'd by nobler pens take wing
Themselves, and their own rude composures sing.
Nor need our young one dread a shipwreck here;
Who trades without a stock has nought to fear.
In every smile of yours, a prize he draws,
And if you damn him, he's but where he was.
Yet where's the reason for the critic crew,
With killing blasts like winter to pursue
The tender plant that ripens but for you?
Nature, in all her works, requires time;
Kindness, and years, 'tis, makes the virgin climb
And shoot and hasten to the expected prime;
And then, if untaught fancy fail to please,
Y'instruct the willing pupil by degrees;
By gentle lessons you your joys improve
And mold her awkward passion into love.
Ev'n folly has its growth: few fools are made;
You drudge and sweat for't, as it were a trade.
'Tis half the labor of your trifling age
To fashion you fit subjects for the stage.
Well! If our author fail to draw you like
In the first draught, you're not to expect Van Dyck.
What, though no master-stroke in this appears,
Yet some may find features resembling theirs.
Nor do the bad alone his colors share;
Neglected virtue is at least shown fair;
And that's enough o' conscience for a play'r.
But if you'd have him take a bolder flight
And draw your pictures by a truer light,

You must yourselves, by follies yet unknown,
Inspire his pencil and divert the town.
Nor judge by this his genius at a stand,
For time, that makes new fools, may mend his hand.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

Sir William Wisewoud, *a rich old gentleman that fancies himself a great master of his passion, which he only is in trivial matters.*
Loveless, *of a debauched life, grew weary of his wife in six months, left her, and the town for debts he did not care to pay, and having spent the last part of his estate beyond sea, returns to England in a very mean condition.*
Sir Novelty Fashion, *to be the first in all foppery.*
Elder Worthy, *a sober gentleman of a fair estate, in love with* Hillaria.
Young Worthy, *his brother, of a looser temper, lover to* Narcissa.
Snap, *servant to* Loveless.
Sly, *servant to* Young Worthy.
A Lawyer.

WOMEN

Amanda, *a woman of strict virtue, married to* Loveless, *very young and forsaken by him.*
Narcissa, *daughter to* Sir William Wisewoud, *a fortune.*
Hillaria, *his niece.*
Flareit, *a kept mistress of* Sir Novelty.
Woman to Amanda.
Maid to Flareit.

Servants, sentinels, porters, bullies, and musicians.

ACT I

Scene I

The Park.

Enter Loveless *and* Snap, *his servant.*

Love. Sirrah! leave your preaching. Your counsel, like an ill clock, either stands still or goes too slow. You ne'er thought my extravagancies amiss while you had your share of 'em; and now I want money to make myself drunk, you advise me to live sober, you dog. They that will hunt pleasure, as I ha' done, rascal, must never give over in a fair chase.

Snap. Nay, I knew you would never rest till you had tired your dogs. Ah, sir! what a fine pack of guineas you have had! and yet you would make 'em run till they were quite spent. Would I were fairly turned out of your service! Here we have been three days in town, and I can safely swear I have lived upon picking a hollow tooth ever since.

Love. Why don't you eat then, sirrah?

Snap. E'en because I don't know where, sir.

Love. Then stay till I eat, hang-dog! Ungrateful rogue, to murmur at a little fasting with me when thou hast been an equal partner of my good fortune!

Snap. Fortune! It makes me weep to think what you have brought yourself and me to! How well might you ha' lived, sir, had you been a sober man! Let me see! I ha' been in your service just ten years. In the first you married and grew weary of your wife; in the second you whored, drank, gamed, run in debt, mortgaged your estate, and was forced to leave the kingdom; in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh you made the tour of Europe, with the state and equipage of a French court favorite, while your poor wife at home broke her heart for the loss of you. In the eighth and ninth you grew poor, and little the wiser; and now in the tenth you are resolved I shall starve with you.

Love. Despicable rogue, canst not thou bear the frowns of a common strumpet, Fortune?

Snap. S'bud, I never think of the pearl necklace you gave that damned Venetian strumpet but I wish her hanged in it!

Love. Why, sirrah! I knew I could not have her without it, and I had a night's enjoyment of her, was worth a pope's revenue for it.

Snap. Ah, you had better ha' laid out your money here in London; I'll undertake you might have had the whole town over and over for half the price. Besides, sir, what a delicate creature was your wife! She was the only celebrated beauty in town; I'll undertake there were more fops and fools run mad for her, 'Odsbud, she was more plagued with 'em, and more talked of, than a good actress with a maiden-head! Why the devil could not she content you?

Love. No, sirrah! The world to me is a garden stocked with all sorts of fruit, where the greatest pleasure we can take is in the variety of taste; but a wife is an eternal apple tree—after a pull or two you are sure to set your teeth on edge.

Snap. And yet I warrant you grudged another man a bit of her, though you valued her no more than you would a half-eaten pippin that had lain a week a-sunning in a parlor window. But see, sir, who's this—for methinks I long to meet with an old acquaintance!

Love. Ha! Egad, he looks like one, and may be necessary as the case stands with me.—

Snap. Pray heaven he do but invite us to dinner!

Enter Young Worthy.

Love. Dear Worthy! Let me embrace thee; the sight of an old friend warms me beyond that of a new mistress.

Young Wor. S'death, what bully's this? Sir, your pardon, I don't know you!

Love. Faith, Will, I am a little out of repairs at present; but I am all that's left of honest Ned Loveless.

Young Wor. Loveless! I am amazed! What means this metamorphosis? Faith, Ned, I am glad to find thee amongst the living, however. How long hast thou been in town?

Love. About three days. But prithee, Will, how goes the world?

Young Wor. Why, like a bowl, it runs on at the old rate; interest is still the jack it aims at; and while it rolls, you know, it must of necessity be often turned upside down. But I doubt, friend, you have bowled out of the green, have lived a little too fast [*Surveying his dress*] like one that has lost all his ready money, and are forced to be an idle spectator. Prithee, what brought thee at last to England?

Love. Why, my last hopes, faith, which were to persuade Sir William Wisewoud (if he be alive), to whom I mortgaged my estate, to let me have five hundred pounds more upon it, or else to get some honest friend to redeem the mortgage and share the overplus! Beside, I thought that London might now be a place of uninterrupted pleasure, for I hear my wife is dead; and to tell you the truth, it was the staleness of her love was the main cause of my going over.

Young Wor. [*aside*]. His wife dead, ha! I'm glad he knows no other; I won't undeceive him, lest the rogue should go and rifle her of what she has.—Yes, faith, I was at her burial and saw her take possession of her long home and am sorry to tell you, Ned, she died with grief! Your wild courses broke her heart.

Love. Why, faith! She was a good-natured fool! That's the truth on it. Well, rest her soul.

Snap. Now, sir, you are a single man, indeed, for you have neither wife nor estate.

Young Wor. But how hast thou improved thy money beyond sea? What hast thou brought over?

Love. Oh, a great deal of experience.

Young Wor. And no money?

Snap. Not a sou, faith, sir, as my belly can testify.

Love. But I have a great deal more wit than I had!

Snap. Not enough to get your estate again or to know where we shall dine today. [*Aside*] Oh, Lord, he don't ask us yet!

Young Wor. Why, your rogue's witty, Ned; where didst thou pick him up?

Love. Don't you remember Snap, formerly your pimp in ordinary? But he is much improved in his calling, I assure you, sir.

Young Wor. I don't doubt it, considering who has been his master.

Snap. Yes, sir, I was an humble servant of yours, and am still, sir, and should be glad to stand behind your chair at dinner, sir. [*Bows.*

Young Wor. Oh, sir, that you may do another time; but to-day I am engaged upon business; however, there's a meal's meat for you. [*Throws him a guinea.*

Snap. Bless my eye-sight, a guinea! Sir, is there ever a whore you would have kicked, any old bawd's windows you would have broken? Shall I beat your tailor for disappointing you? Or your surgeon that would be paid for a clap of two years' standing? If you have occasion, you may command your humble servant.—

Young Wor. Sweet sir, I am obliged to you, but at present am so happy as to have no occasion for your assistance.—But hark you, Ned; prithee, what hast thou done with thy estate?

Love. I pawned it to buy pleasure, that is, old wine, young whores, and the conversation of brave fellows as mad as myself. Pox! If a man has appetites, they are torments if not indulged. I shall never complain as long as I have health and vigor; and as for my poverty, why the devil should

I be ashamed of that, since a rich man won't blush at his knavery?

Young Wor. Faith, Ned, I am as much in love with wickedness as thou canst be, but I am for having it at a cheaper rate than my ruin. Don't it grate you a little to see your friends blush for you?

Love. It is very odd that people should be more ashamed of others' faults than their own; I never yet could meet with a man that offered me counsel, but had more occasion for it himself.

Young Wor. So far you may be in the right; for indeed good counsel is like a home jest, which every busy fool is offering to his fellow, and yet won't take himself.

Love. Right! Thus have I known a jolly, red-nosed parson at three o'clock in the morning belch out invectives against late hours and hard drinking, and a canting, hypocritical sinner protest against fornication, when the rogue was himself just crawling out of a flux.

Young Wor. Though these are truths, friend, yet I don't see any advantage you can draw from them. Prithee, how will you live now all your money's gone?

Love. Live! How dost thou live? Thou art but a younger brother, I take it.

Young Wor. Oh, very well, sir, though, faith, my father left me but three thousand pounds, one of which I gave for a place at court that I still enjoy; the other two are gone after pleasure, as thou sayest. But besides this, I am supplied by the continual bounty of an indulgent brother; now I am loath to load his good nature too much, and therefore have e'en thought fit, like the rest of my raking brotherhood, to purge out my wild humors with matrimony. By the way, I have taken care to see the dose well sweetened with a swinging portion.

Love. Ah, Will, you'll find marrying to cure lewdness is like surfeiting to cure hunger: for all the consequence is, you loathe what you surfeit on and are only chaste to her you marry. But prithee, friend, what is thy wife that must be?

Young Wor. Why, faith, since I believe the matter is too far gone for any man to postpone me—at least, I am sure, thou wilt not do me an injury to do thyself no good—I'll tell thee: You must know, my mistress is the daughter of that very knight to whom you mortgaged your estate, Sir William Wisewoud.

Love. Why, she's an heiress and has a thousand pounds a year in her own hands, if she be of age. But I suppose the old man knows nothing of your intentions. Therefore, prithee, how have you had opportunities of promoting your love?

Young Wor. Why, thus: You must know, Sir William, being very well acquainted with the largeness of my brother's estate, designs his daughter for him, and to encourage his passion offers him out of his own pocket the additional blessing of five thousand pounds. This offer my brother, knowing my inclinations, seems to embrace; but at the same time is really in love with his niece, who lives with him in the same house; and, therefore, to hide my design from the old gentleman, I pretend visits to his daughter as an intercessor for my brother only, and thus he has given me daily opportunities of advancing my own interest—nay, and I have so contrived it that I design to have the five thousand pounds too.

Love. How is that possible, since I see no hopes of the old man's consent for you?

Young Wor. Have a day's patience, and you'll see the effects on it; in a word, it is so sure that nothing but delays can hinder my success; therefore I am very earnest with my mistress that to-morrow may be the day. But a pox on it! I have two women to prevail with; for my brother quarrels every other day with his mistress, and while I am reconciling him, I lose ground in my own amour.

Love. Why, has not your mistress told you her mind yet?

Young Wor. She will, I suppose, as soon as she knows it herself, for within this week she has changed it as often as her linen and keeps it as secret, too; for she would no more own her love before my face than she would shift herself before my face.

Love. Pshaw! She shows it the more by striving to conceal it.

Young Wor. Nay, she does give me some proofs indeed, for she will suffer nobody but herself to speak ill of me, is always uneasy till I am sent for, never pleased when I am with her, and still jealous when I leave her.

Love. Well, success to thee, Will; I will send the fiddles to release you from your first night's labor.

Young Wor. But hark you, have a care of disobliging the bride, though. Ha! Yonder goes my brother. I am afraid his walking so early proceeds from some disturbance in his love; I must after him and set him right. Dear Ned, you'll excuse me; shall I see you at the Blue Posts between five and six this afternoon?

Love. With all my heart—but do you hear?—canst not thou lend me the fellow to that same guinea you gave my man; I'll give you my bond if you mistrust me.

Young Wor. Oh, sir, your necessity is obligation enough—there it is, and all I have, faith; when I see you at night, you may command me further. Adieu, at six at farthest. [*Exit* Young Worthy.

Love. Without fail. So! Now, rascal, you are hungry, are you! Thou deservest never

to eat again. Rogue! Grumble before fortune had quite forsaken us!

Snap. Ah, dear sir, the thoughts of eating again have so transported me I am resolved to live and die with you.

Love. Look ye, sirrah, here's that will provide us of a dinner and a brace of whores into the bargain, at least as guineas and whores go now.

Snap. Ah, good sir, no whores before dinner, I beseech you.

Love. Well, for once I'll take your advice; for, to say truth, a man is as unfit to follow love with an empty stomach as business with an empty head. Therefore, I think a bit and a bottle won't be amiss first.

The gods of wine and love were ever friends;
For by the help of wine, love gains his ends.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Elder Worthy *with a letter.*

Elder Wor. How hard is it to find that happiness which our short-sighted passions hope from woman! It is not their cold disdain or cruelty should make a faithful lover curse his stars; that is but reasonable. It is the shadow in our pleasure's picture. Without it love could never be heightened. No, it is their pride and vain desire of many lovers that robs our hope of its imagined rapture. The blind are only happy, for, if we look through reason's never erring perspective, we then survey their souls and view the rubbish we were chaffering for. And such I find Hillaria's mind is made of. This letter is an order for the knocking off my fetters, and I'll send it her immediately.

Enter to him Young Worthy.

Young Wor. Morrow, brother! [*Seeing the letter.*] What, is your fit returned again? What beau's box has Hillaria taken snuff from? What fool has led her from the box to her coach? What fop has she suffered to read a play or novel to her? Or whose money has she indiscreetly won at basset? Come, come, let's see the ghastly wound she has made in your quiet, that I may know how much claret to prescribe you.

Elder Wor. I have my wound and cure from the same person, I'll assure you—the one from Hillaria's wit and beauty, the other from her pride and vanity.

Young Wor. That's what I could never yet find her guilty of. Are you angry at her loving you?

Elder Wor. I am angry at myself for believing she ever did.

Young Wor. Have her actions spoke the contrary? Come, you know she loves.

Elder Wor. Indeed she gave a great proof on it last night here in the park, by fastening on a fool and caressing him before my face, when she might have so easily avoided him.

Young Wor. What! And I warrant, interrupted you in the middle of your sermon; for I don't question but you were preaching to her. But, prithee, who was the fool she fastened upon?

Elder Wor. One that heaven intended for a man; but the whole business of his life is to make the world believe he is of another species. A thing that affects mightily to ridicule himself, only to give others a kind of necessity of praising him. I can't say he's a slave to every new fashion, for he pretends to be the master of it, and is ever reviving some old or advancing some new piece of foppery; and though it don't take, is still as well pleased, because it then obliges the town to take the more notice of him. He's so fond of a public reputation that he is more extravagant in his attempts to gain it than the fool that fired Diana's temple to immortalize his name.

Young Wor. You have said enough to tell me his name is Sir Novelty Fashion.

Elder Wor. The same; but that which most concerns me, he has the impudence to address Hillaria, and she vanity enough to discard him.

Young Wor. Is this all? Why, thou art as hard to please in a wife as thy mistress in a new gown. How many women have you took in hand and yet can't please yourself at last?

Elder Wor. I had need to have the best goods when I offer so great a price as marriage for them. Hillaria has some good qualities, but not enough to make a wife of.

Young Wor. She has beauty!

Elder Wor. Granted.

Young Wor. And money.

Elder Wor. Too much—enough to supply her vanity.

Young Wor. She has sense.

Elder Wor. Not enough to believe I am no fool.

Young Wor. She has wit.

Elder Wor. Not enough to deceive me.

Young Wor. Why, then, you are happy, if she can't deceive you.

Elder Wor. Yet she has folly enough to endeavor it. I'll see her no more, and this shall tell her so.

Young Wor. Which in an hour's time you'll repent as much as ever——

Elder Wor. As ever I should marrying her.

Young Wor. You'll have a damned sneaking look when you are forced to ask her pardon for your ungenerous suspicion and lay the fault upon excess of love.

Elder Wor. I am not so much in love as you imagine.

Young Wor. Indeed, sir, you are in love, and that letter tells her so.

Elder Wor. Read it; you'll find the contrary.

Young Wor. Prithee, I know what's in it better than thou dost. You say it is to take your leave of her; but I say it is in hopes of a kind, excusive answer. But faith, you mistake her and yourself too. She is too high spirited not to take you at your word; and you are too much in love not to ask her pardon.

Elder Wor. Well, then, I'll not be too rash, but will show my resentment in forbearing my visits.

Young Wor. Your visits? Come, I shall soon try what a man of resolution you are, for yonder she comes. Now, let's see if you have power to move.

Elder Wor. I'll soon convince you of that. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Young Wor. Ha! Gone! I don't like that. I am sorry to find him so resolute. But I hope Hillaria has taken too fast hold of his heart to let this fit shake him off. I must to her and make up this breach, for while his amour stands still, I have no hopes of advancing my own. [*Exit.*

Enter Hillaria, Narcissa, *and* Amanda, *in mourning.*

Hill. Well, dear Amanda, thou art the most constant wife I ever heard of, not to shake off the memory of an ill husband after eight or ten years' absence; nay, to mourn, for aught you know, for the living, too, and such a husband that though he were alive would never thank you for it. Why do you persist in such a hopeless grief?

Aman. Because it is hopeless! For if he be alive, he is dead to me. His dead affections not virtue's self can e'er retrieve. Would I were with him, though in his grave!

Hill. In my mind, you are much better where you are. The grave! Young widows use to have warmer wishes. But, methinks, the death of a rich old uncle should be a cordial to your sorrows.

Aman. That adds to them, for he was the only relation I had left, and was as tender of me as the nearest! He was a father to me.

Hill. He was better than some fathers to you, for he died just when you had occasion for his estate.

Narc. I have an old father, and the deuce take me!—I think he only lives to hinder me of my occasions. But Lord bless me, madam, how can you be unhappy with two thousand pounds a year in your own possession?

Hill. For my part, the greatest reason I think you have to grieve is that you are not sure your husband's dead; for, were that confirmed, then indeed there were hopes that one poison might drive out another—you might marry again.

Aman. All the comfort of my life is that I can tell my conscience I have been true to virtue.

Hill. And to an extravagant husband that cares not a farthing for you. But come, let's leave this unseasonable talk, and pray give me a little of your advice. What shall I do with this Mr. Worthy? Would you advise me to make a husband of him?

Aman. I am but an ill judge of men; the only one I thought myself secure of most cruelly deceived me.

Hill. A losing gamester is fittest to give warning. What do you think of him?

Aman. Better than of any man I know. I read nothing in him but what is some part of a good man's character.

Hill. He's jealous.

Aman. He's a lover.

Hill. He taxes me with a fool.

Aman. He would preserve your reputation, and a fool's love ends only in the ruin of it.

Hill. Methinks he's not handsome.

Aman. He's a man, madam.

Hill. Why, then, e'en let him make a woman of me.

Narc. [*smiling*]. Pray, madam, what do you think of his brother?

Aman. I would not think of him.

Narc. Oh, dear—why, pray?

Aman. He puts me in mind of a man too like him, one that had beauty, wit, and falsehood!

Narc. You have hit some part of his character, I must confess, madam; but as to his truth, I'm sure he loves only me.

Aman. I don't doubt but he tells you so, nay, and swears it, too.

Narc. O Lord! madam, I hope I may without vanity believe him.

Aman. But you will hardly without magic secure him.

Narc. I shall use no spells or charms but this poor face, madam.

Aman. And your fortune, madam.

Narc. [*aside*]. Senseless malice! I know he'd marry me without a groat.

Aman. Then he's not the man I take him for.

Narc. Why pray? What do you take him for?

Aman. A wild young fellow that loves everything he sees.

Narc. He never loved you yet.

[*Peevishly.*

Aman. I hope, madam, he never saw anything in me to encourage him.

Narc. In my conscience you are in the right on it, madam: I dare swear he never did, nor ever would, though he gazed till doomsday.

Aman. I hope, madam, your charms will prevent his putting himself to the trial, and I wish he may never——

Narc. Nay, dear madam, no more railing at him, unless you would have me believe you love him.

Hill. Indeed, ladies, you are both in the wrong. You, cousin, in being angry at what you desired, her opinion of your lover; and you, madam, for speaking truth against the man she resolves to love.

Narc. Love him! Prithee, cousin, no more of that old stuff.

Hill. Stuff! Why, don't you own you are to marry him this week? Here he comes; I suppose you'll tell him another thing in his ear.

Enter Young Worthy.

Hill. Mr. Worthy, your servant. You look with the face of business. What's the news, pray?

Young Wor. Faith, madam, I have news for you all, and private news, too. But that of the greatest consequence is with this lady. Your pardon, ladies, I'll whisper with you all, one after another.

Narc. Come, cousin, will you walk? The gentleman has business; we shall interrupt him.

Hill. Why, really, cousin, I don't say positively you love Mr. Worthy, but I vow this looks very like jealousy.

Narc. Pish! Lord! Hillaria, you are in a very odd humor to-day. But to let you see I have no such weak thoughts about me, I'll wait as unconcerned as yourself. [*Aside*] I'll rattle him. [Hillaria *and* Narcissa *retire.*

Aman. Not unpleasing, say you? Pray, sir, unfold yourself, for I have long despaired of welcome news.

Young Wor. Then in a word, madam, your husband, Mr. Loveless, is in town, and has been these three days. I parted with him not an hour ago.

Aman. In town! You amaze me! For heaven's sake, go on.

Young Wor. Faith, madam, considering Italy and those parts have furnished him with nothing but an improvement of that lewdness he carried over, I can't properly give you joy of his arrival. Besides, he is so very poor that you would take him for an inhabitant of that country. And when I confirmed your being dead, he only shook his head and called you good-natured fool, or to that effect. Nay, though I told him his unkindness broke your heart.

Aman. Barbarous man! Not shed a tear upon my grave? But why did you tell him I was dead?

Young Wor. Because, madam, I thought you had no mind to have your house plundered, and for another reason, which, if you dare listen to me, perhaps you'll not dislike. In a word, it is such a stratagem that will either make him ashamed of his folly or in love with your virtue.

Aman. Can there be a hope, when even my death could not move him to a relenting sigh? Yet pray instruct me, sir.

Young Wor. You know, madam, it was not above four or five months after you were married but, as most young husbands do, he grew weary of you. Now, I am confident it was more an affectation of being fashionably vicious than any reasonable dislike he could either find in your mind or person. Therefore, could you by some artifice pass upon him as a new mistress, I am apt to believe you would find none of the wonted coldness in his love, but a younger heat and fierce desire.

Aman. Suppose this done, what would be the consequence?

Young Wor. Oh, your having then a just occasion to reproach him with his broken vows, and to let him see the weakness of his deluded fancy, which even in a wife, while unknown, could find those real charms which his blind, ungrateful lewdness would never allow her to be mistress of. After this, I'd have you seem freely to resign him to those fancied raptures which he denied were in a virtuous woman. Who knows but this, with a little submissive eloquence, may strike him with so great sense of shame as may reform his thoughts and fix him yours?

Aman. You have revived me, sir. But how can I assure myself he'll like me as a mistress?

Young Wor. From your being a new one. Leave the management of all to me. I have a trick shall draw him to your bed, and when he's there, faith, even let him cuckold himself. I'll engage he likes you as a mistress, though he could not as a wife. [*Aside*] At least she'll have the pleasure of knowing the difference between a husband and a lover, without the scandal of the former.

Aman. You have obliged me, sir; if I succeed, the glory shall be yours.

Young Wor. I'll wait on you at your lodging and consult how I may be farther serviceable to you. But you must put this in a speedy execution, lest he should hear of you and prevent your designs; in the meantime, it is a secret to all the world but yourself and me.

Aman. I'll study to be grateful, sir.

[Hillaria *and* Narcissa *come forward.*

Young Wor. [*to* Hillaria]. Now for you, madam.

Narc. [*aside*]. So! I am to be last served! Very well!

Young Wor. My brother, madam, confesses he scattered some rough words last

night, and I have taken the liberty to tell you, you gave him some provocation.

Hill. That may be; but I'm resolved to be mistress of my actions before marriage, and no man shall usurp a power over me till I give it him.

Young Wor. At least, madam, consider what he said as the effect of an impatient passion and give him leave this afternoon to set all right again.

Hill. Well, if I don't find myself out of order after dinner, perhaps I may step into the garden. But I won't promise you, neither.

Young Wor. I dare believe you without it. [*To* Narcissa] Now, madam, I am your humble servant.

Narc. And everybody's humble servant. [*Walks off.*

Young Wor. Why, madam, I am come to tell you——

Narc. What success you have had with that lady, I suppose; I don't mind intrigues, sir.

Young Wor. [*aside*]. I like this jealousy, however, though I scarce know how to appease it.—It is business of moment, madam, and may be done in a moment.

Narc. Yours is done with me, sir; but my business is not so soon done as you imagine.

Young Wor. In a word, I have very near reconciled my brother and your cousin, and I don't doubt but to-morrow will be the day, if I were but as well assured of your consent for my happiness, too.

Narc. First tell me your discourse with that lady; and afterwards, if you can, look me in the face—Oh, are you studying, sir?

Young Wor. [*aside*]. S'death! I must not trust her with it; she'll tell it the whole town for a secret. Pox, never a lie!

Narc. You said it was of the greatest consequence, too.

Young Wor. [*aside*]. A good hint, faith.—Why, madam, since you will needs force it from me, it was to desire her to advance my interest with you. But all my entreaties could not prevail, for she told me I was unworthy of you. Was not this of consequence, madam?

Narc. Nay, now I must believe you, Mr. Worthy, and I ask your pardon, for she was just railing against you for a husband, before you came.

Young Wor. Oh! Madam, a favored lover like a good poem, for the malice of some few, makes the generous temper more admire it.

Narc. Nay, what she said, I must confess, had much the same effects as the coffee critics ridiculing Prince Arthur, for I found a pleasing disappointment in my reading you, and till I see your beauties equalled I shan't dislike you for a few faults.

Young Wor. Then, madam, since you have blessed me with your good opinion, let me beg of you, before these ladies, to complete my happiness to-morrow. Let this be the last night of your lying alone.

Narc. What do you mean?

Young Wor. To marry you to-morrow, madam.

Narc. Marry me! Who put that in your head?

Young Wor. Some small encouragement which my hopes have formed, madam.

Narc. Hopes! Oh insolence! Do you think I can be moved to love a man, to kiss him, toy with him, and so forth?

Young Wor. [*aside*]. Egad! I find nothing but downright impudence will do with her.—No, madam, it is the man must kiss and toy with you, and so forth. Come, my dear angel, pronounce the joyful word and draw the scene of my eternal happiness. Ah, methinks I'm there already, eager and impatient of approaching bliss! Just laid within the bridal bed, our friends retired, the curtains close drawn around us, no light but Celia's eyes, no noise but her soft, trembling words and broken sighs that plead in vain for mercy. And now a trickling tear steals down her glowing cheek, which tells the rushing lover at length she yields, yet vows she'd rather die, but still submits to the unexperienced joy. [*Embracing her.*

Hill. What raptures, Mr. Worthy!

Young Wor. Only the force of love in imagination, madam.

Narc. Oh, Lord, dear cousin, and madam, let's be gone; I vow he grows rude! Oh, for heaven's sake, I shan't shake off my fright these ten days. Oh, Lord, I will not stay—begone! for I declare I loathe the sight of you. [*Exit.*

Young Wor. I hope you'll stand my friend, madam.

Hill. I'll get her into the garden after dinner. [*Exeunt the ladies.*

Young Wor. I find there's nothing to be done with my lady before company; it is a strange affected piece. But there's no fault in her thousand pounds a year, and that's the loadstone that attracts my heart. The wise and grave may tell us of strange chimeras called virtues in a woman and that they alone are the best dowry; but, faith, we younger brothers are of another mind.

Women are changed from what they were of old;
Therefore let lovers still this maxim hold:
"She's only worth that brings her weight in gold."

[*Exit.*

ACT II

Scene I

A garden belonging to Sir William Wisewoud's *house.*

Enter Narcissa, Hillaria, *and* Sir Novelty Fashion.

Hill. Oh, for heaven's sake, no more of this gallantry, Sir Novelty, for I know you say the same to every woman you see.

Sir Nov. Every one that sees you, madam, must say the same. Your beauty, like the rack, forces every beholder to confess his crime—of daring to adore you.

Narc. [*aside*]. Oh, I haven't patience to hear all this. If he be blind, I'll open his eyes. I vow, Sir Novelty, you men of amour are strange creatures: you think no woman worth your while unless you walk over a rival's ruin to her heart. I know nothing has encouraged your passion to my cousin more than her engagement to Mr. Worthy.

Hill. [*aside*]. Poor creature, now is she angry; she hasn't the address of a fop. I nauseate.

Sir Nov. Oh, madam, as to that, I hope the lady will easily distinguish the sincerity of her adorers, though I must allow Mr. Worthy is infinitely the handsomer person.

Narc. Oh, fie, Sir Novelty, make not such a preposterous comparison.

Sir Nov. Oh, 'ged, madam, there is no comparison.

Narc. Pardon me, sir; he's an unpolished animal!

Sir Nov. Why, does your ladyship really think me tolerable?

Hill. [*aside*]. So! She has snapped his heart already.

Sir Nov. Pray, madam, how do I look to-day? What, cursedly? I'll warrant with a more hellish complexion than a stale actress at a rehearsal. I don't know, madam—it is true—the town does talk of me, indeed; but, the devil take me, in my mind I am a very ugly fellow!

Narc. Now you are too severe, Sir Novelty.

Sir Nov. Not I, burn me. For heaven's sake, deal freely with me, madam, and if you can, tell me one tolerable thing about me.

Hill. [*aside*]. It would pose me, I'm sure.

Narc. Oh, Sir Novelty, this is unanswerable; it is hard to know the brightest part of a diamond.

Sir Nov. You'll make me blush, stop my vitals, madam. [*Aside*] Egad, I always said she was a woman of sense. Strike me dumb, I am in love with her. I'll try her farther.—But, madam, is it possible I may vie with Mr. Worthy—not that he is any rival of mine, madam, for I can assure you my inclinations lie where perhaps your ladyship little thinks.

Hill. [*aside*]. So! Now I am rid of him.

Sir Nov. But pray tell me, madam, for I really love a severe critic, I am sure you must believe he has a more happy genius in dress. For my part I am but a sloven.

Narc. He a genius! Unsufferable! Why, he dresses worse than a captain of the militia. But you, Sir Novelty, are a true original, the very pink of fashion. I'll warrant you there's not a milliner in town but has got an estate by you.

Sir Nov. I must confess, madam, I am for doing good to my country. For you see this suit, madam—I suppose you are not ignorant what a hard time the ribbon weavers have had since the late mourning. Now my design is to set the poor rogues up again by recommending this sort of trimming. The fancy is pretty well for second mourning. By the way, madam, I had fifteen hundred guineas laid in my hand as a gratuity to encourage it. But, egad, I refused them, being too well acquainted with the consequence of taking a bribe in a national concern.

Hill. A very charitable fashion indeed, Sir Novelty. But how if it should not take?

Narc. Ridiculous! Take? I warrant you in a week the whole town will have it; though perhaps Mr. Worthy will be one of the last of them. Here's a mere *valet de chambre* to all fashion and never is in any till his betters have left them off.

Sir Nov. Nay, 'ged, now I must laugh, for the devil take me if I did not meet him not above a fortnight ago in a coat with buttons no bigger than nutmegs.

Hill. There I must confess you outdo him, Sir Novelty.

Sir Nov. Oh, dear madam, why mine are not above three inches diameter.

Hill. But methinks, Sir Novelty, your sleeve is a little too extravagant.

Sir Nov. Nay, madam, there you wrong me; mine does but just reach my knuckles. But my Lord Overdo's covers his diamond ring.

Hill. Nay, I confess the fashion may be very useful to you gentlemen that make campaigns; for should you unfortunately lose an arm or so, that sleeve might be very convenient to hide the defect on it.

Sir Nov. Ha! I think your ladyship's in the right on it, madam.

[*Hiding his hand in his sleeve.*

Narc. Oh, such an air! So becoming a negligence! Upon my soul, Sir Novelty, you'll be the envy of the *beau monde.*

Hill. Mr. Worthy! A good fancy were

thrown away upon him. But you, sir, are an ornament to your clothes.

Sir Nov. Then your ladyship really thinks they are—*bien entendu!*

Hill. A mervielle, monsieur!

Sir Nov. She has almost as much wit as her cousin. I must confess, madam, this coat has had a universal approbation. For this morning I had all the eminent tailors about town at my levee earnestly petitioning for the first measure of it. Now, madam, if you thought it would oblige Mr. Worthy, I would let his tailor have it before any of them.

Narc. See, here he comes, and the deuce take me, I think it would be a great piece of good nature, for I declare he looks as rough as a Dutch corporal. Prithee, Sir Novelty, let's laugh at him.

Sir Nov. Oh, ged! No, madam, that were too cruel. Why, you know he can't help it. Let's take no notice of him.

Hill. [*aside*]. Wretched coxcomb.

Enter Elder Worthy.

Elder Wor. [*aside*]. I find my resolution is but vain; my feet have brought me hither against my will. But sure I can command my tongue, which I'll bite off ere it shall seek a reconciliation. Still so familiar there! But it is no matter; I'll try if I can wear indifference and seem as careless in my love as she is of her honor, which she can never truly know the worth of while she persists to let a fool thus play with it. Ladies, your humble servant.

Hill. [*aside*]. Now I can't forbear fretting his spleen a little!—Oh, Mr. Worthy, we are admiring Sir Novelty and his new suit; did you ever see so sweet a fancy? He is as full of variety as a good play.

Elder Wor. He's a very pleasant comedy indeed, madam, and dressed with a great deal of good satire, and no doubt may oblige both the stage and the town, especially the ladies.

Hill. [*aside*]. So! There's for me!

Sir Nov. Oh, ged! Nay, prithee, Tom, you know my humor. Ladies! Stop my vitals, I don't believe there are five hundred in town that ever took any notice of me.

Elder Wor. Oh, sir, there are some that take so much notice of you that the town takes notice of them for it.

Hill. [*aside*]. It works rarely.

Sir Nov. How of them, Tom, upon my account? Oh, ged, I would not be the ruin of any lady's reputation for the world. Stop my vitals, I am very sorry for it. Prithee, name but one that has a favorable thought of me, and to convince you that I have no design upon her, I'll instantly visit her in an unpowdered periwig.

Elder Wor. Nay, she I mean is a woman of sense, too.

Sir Nov. Phoo! Prithee, pox, don't banter me. It is impossible; what can she see in me?

Elder Wor. Oh, a thousand taking qualities. This lady will inform you—come, I'll introduce you. [*Pulls him.*

Sir Nov. Oh, ged, no. Prithee—hark you in your ear. I am off of her! Damme if I be n't; I am, stop my vitals!

Elder Wor. [*aside*]. Wretched rogue!—Pshaw! No matter, I'll reconcile you. Come, madam.

Hill. Sir!

Elder Wor. This gentleman humbly begs to kiss your hands.

Hill. He needs not your recommendation, sir.

Elder Wor. True! A fool recommends himself to your sex, and that's the reason men of common sense live unmarried.

Hill. A fool without jealousy is better than a wit with ill nature.

Elder Wor. A friendly office, seeing your fault is ill nature.

Hill. Believing more than we have is pitiful. You know I hate this wretch, loathe and scorn him.

Elder Wor. Fools have a secret art of pleasing women. If he did not delight you, you would not hazard your reputation by encouraging his love.

Hill. Dares he wrong my reputation?

Elder Wor. He need not. The world will do it for him while you keep him company.

Hill. I dare answer it to the world.

Elder Wor. Then why not to me?

Hill. To satisfy you were a fondness I should never forgive myself.

Elder Wor. To persist in it, is what I'll never forgive.

Hill. Insolence! Is it come to this? Never see me more.

Elder Wor. I have lost the sight of you already; there hangs a cloud of folly between you and the woman I once thought you.

As Hillaria *is going off enter* Young Worthy.

Young Wor. What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ceasing, does the purpose lose.

Madam, therefore, pray let me engage you to stay a little till your fury is over, that you may see whether you have reason to be angry or no.

Sir Nov. [*to* Narcissa]. Pray, madam, who is that gentleman?

Narc. Mr. Worthy's brother, sir, a gentleman of no mean parts, I can assure you.

Sir Nov. I don't doubt it, madam. He has a very good walk.

[Sir Novelty *and* Narcissa *retire.*

Hill. To be jealous of me with a fool is an affront to my understanding.

Young Wor. Tamely to resign your reputation to the merciless vanity of a fool were no proof of his love.

Hill. It is questioning my conduct.

Young Wor. Why, you let him kiss your hand last night before his face.

Hill. The fool diverted me, and I gave him my hand, as I would lend my money, fan, or handkerchief to a legerdemain that I might see him play all his tricks over.

Young Wor. Oh, madam, no juggler is so deceitful as a fop, for while you look his folly in the face, he steals away your reputation with more ease than the other picks your pocket.

Hill. Some fools indeed are dangerous.

Young Wor. I grant you your design is only to laugh at him, but that's more than he finds out. Therefore you must expect he will tell the world another story, and it is ten to one but the consequence makes you repent of your curiosity.

Hill. You speak like an oracle; I tremble at the thoughts on it.

Young Wor. Here's one shall reconcile your fears. Brother, I have done your business. Hillaria is convinced of her indiscretion and has a pardon ready for your asking it.

Elder Wor. She's the criminal; I have no occasion for it.

Young Wor. See, she comes toward you; give her a civil word, at least.

Hill. Mr. Worthy, I'll not be behindhand in the acknowledgment I owe you. I freely confess my folly and forgive your harsh construction of it. Nay, I'll not condemn your want of good nature in not endeavoring, as your brother has done, by mild arguments to convince me of my error.

Elder Wor. Now you vanquish me! I blush to be outdone in generous love! I am your slave; dispose of me as you please.

Hill. No more; from this hour be you the master of my actions and my heart.

Elder Wor. This goodness gives you the power, and I obey with pleasure.

Young Wor. So! I find I haven't preached to no purpose! Well, madam, if you find him guilty of love, even let to-morrow be his execution day; make a husband of him, and there's the extent of love's law.

Elder Wor. Brother, I am indebted to you.

Young Wor. Well, I'll give you a discharge, if you will but leave me but half an hour in private with that lady.

Hill. How will you get rid of Sir Novelty?

Young Wor. I'll warrant you; leave him to me.

Hill. Come, Mr. Worthy, as we walk I'll inform you how I intend to sacrifice that wretch to your laughter.

Elder Wor. Not, madam, that I want revenge on so contemptible a creature, but I think you owe this justice to yourself, to let him see, if possible, you never took him for any other than what he really is.

Young Wor. Well, pox of your politics, prithee consult of them within.

Hill. We'll obey you, sir.

[*Exeunt* Elder Worthy *and* Hillaria.

Young Wor. Pray, madam, give me leave to beg a word in private with you; sir, if you please.—

[*To* Sir Novelty, *who is taking snuff.*

Sir Nov. Ay, sir, with all my heart.

Young Wor. Sir——

Sir Nov. Nay, it is right, I'll assure you.

[*Offering his box.*

Young Wor. Ay, sir—but now the lady would be alone.

Sir Nov. Sir!

Young Wor. The lady would be alone, sir.

Sir Nov. I don't hear her say any such thing.

Young Wor. Then I tell you so, and I would advise you to believe me.

Sir Nov. I shall not take your advice, sir. But if you really think the lady would be alone, why—you had best leave her.

Young Wor. In short, sir, your company is very unseasonable at present.

Sir Nov. I can tell you, sir, if you have no more wit than manners, the lady will be but scurvily entertained.

Narc. Oh, fie, gentlemen, no quarrelling before a woman, I beseech you. Pray let me know the business.

Sir Nov. My business is love, madam.

Narc. And yours, sir?

Young Wor. What I hope you are no stranger to, madam. As for that spark, you need take no care of him, for if he stays much longer, I will do his business myself.

Narc. [*aside*]. Well, I vow love's a pleasant thing when the men come to cutting of throats once. O 'gad, I'd fain have them fight a little. Methinks Narcissa would sound so great in an expiring lover's mouth. Well, I am resolved Sir Novelty shall not go yet, for I will have the pleasure of hearing myself praised a little, though I don't marry this month for it. Come, gentlemen, since you both say love's your business, e'en plead for yourselves, and he that speaks the greater passion shall have the fairest return.

Young Wor. [*aside*]. Oh, the devil! Now is she wrapt with the hopes of a little flattery! There's no remedy but patience. S'death, what piece have I to work upon?

Narc. Come, gentlemen, one at a time. Sir Novelty, what have you to say to me?

Sir Nov. In the first place, madam, I was the first person in England that was complimented with the name of "Beau," which is a title I prefer before "Right Honorable," for that may be inherited, but this I extorted from the whole nation by my surprising mien and unexampled gallantry.

Narc. So, sir!

Sir Nov. Then another thing, madam: It has been observed that I have been eminently successful in those fashions I have recommended to the town, and I don't question but this very suit will raise as many ribbon-weavers as ever the clipping or melting trade did goldsmiths.

Narc. [*aside*]. Pish! What does the fool mean? He says nothing of me yet.

Sir Nov. In short, madam, the cravat string, the garter, the sword knot, the centurine, the burdash, the steenkirk, the large button, the long sleeve, the plume, and full peruke were all created, cried down, or revived by me. In a word, madam, there has never been anything particularly taking or agreeable for these ten years past, but your humble servant was the author of it.

Young Wor. [*aside*]. Where the devil will this end?

Narc. This is all extravagant, Sir Novelty; but what have you to say to me, sir?

Sir Nov. I'll come to you presently, madam, I have just done. Then you must know my coach and equipage are as well known as myself, and since the conveniency of two play houses, I have a better opportunity of showing them; for between every act, whisk! I am gone from one to the other. Oh, what pleasure it is at a good play to go out before half an act's done!

Narc. Why at a good play?

Sir Nov. Oh, madam, it looks particular and gives the whole audience an opportunity of turning upon me at once. Then do they conclude I have some extraordinary business or a fine woman to go to at least; and then again it shows my contempt of what the dull town think their chiefest diversion. But if I do stay a play out, I always sit with my back to the stage.

Narc. Why so, sir?

Sir Nov. Then everybody will imagine I have been tired with it before, or that I am jealous who talks to who in the King's box. And thus, madam, do I take more pains to preserve a public reputation than ever any lady took after the smallpox to recover her complexion.

Narc. Well, but to the point, what have you to say to me, Sir Novelty?

Young Wor. [*aside*]. Now does she expect some compliment shall out-flatter her glass.

Sir Nov. To you, madam? Why, I have been saying all this to you.

Narc. To what end, sir?

Sir Nov. Why, all this I have done for your sake.

Narc. What kindness is it to me?

Sir Nov. Why, madam, don't you think it more glory to be beloved by one eminently particular person, whom all the town knows and talks of, than to be adored by five hundred dull souls that have lived incognito?

Narc. That I must confess is a prevailing argument; but still you haven't told me why you love me.

Young Wor. That's a task he has left for me, madam.

Sir Nov. It is a province I never undertake, I must confess; I think it is sufficient if I tell a lady why she should love me.

Narc. [*aside*]. Hang him! He's too conceited; he's so in love with himself he won't allow a woman the bare comfort of a cold compliment. Well, Mr. Worthy?

Young Wor. Why, madam, I have observed several particular qualities in your ladyship that I have perfectly adored you for, as the majestic toss of your head, your obliging bowed curtsey, your satirical smile, your blushing laugh, your demure look, the careless tie of your hood, the genteel flirt of your fan, the designed accident in your letting fall, and your agreeable manner of receiving it from him that takes it up.

[*What he speaks, she imitates in dumb show. They both offer to take up her fan, and in striving* YOUNG WORTHY *pushes* SIR NOVELTY *on his back.*

Sir Nov. [*adjusting himself*]. I hope your ladyship will excuse my disorder, madam. How now?

Enter a Footman to SIR NOVELTY.

Footm. Oh, sir, Mrs. Flareit——

Sir Nov. Ha! Speak lower. What of her?

Footm. By some unlucky accident has discovered your being here and raves like a mad woman. She's at your lodging, sir, and had broke you above forty pounds' worth of china before I came away. She talked of following hither, and if you don't make haste I'm afraid will be here before you can get through the house, sir.

Sir Nov. [*aside*]. This woman is certainly the devil. Her jealousy is implacable; I must get rid of her, though I give her more for a separate maintenance than her conscience demanded for a settlement before enjoyment. —See the coach ready, and if you meet her, be sure you stop her with some pretended business till I am got away from hence.— Madam, I ask your ladyship ten thousand pardons. There's a person of quality expects me at my lodging upon extraordinary business.

Narc. What, will you leave us, Sir Novelty?

Sir Nov. As unwillingly as the soul the body. But this is an irresistible occasion. Madam, your most devoted slave. Sir, your most humble servant. Madam, I kiss your hands. Oh, 'ged, no farther, dear sir, upon my soul I won't stir if you do.

[YOUNG WORTHY *sees him to the door.* *Exit* SIR NOVELTY.

Young Wor. Nay then, sir, your humble servant.—So! This was a lucky deliverance.

Narc. I overheard the business. You see, Mr. Worthy, a man must be a slave to a mistress sometimes, as well as a wife; yet all can't persuade your sex to a favorable opinion of poor marriage.

Young Wor. I long, madam, for an opportunity to convince you of your error; and therefore give me leave to hope to-morrow you will free me from the pain of farther expectation and make a husband of me. Come, I'll spare your blushes, and believe I have already named the day.

Narc. Had not we better consider a little?

Young Wor. No, let's avoid consideration; it is an enemy both to love and courage. They that consider much live to be old bachelors and young fighters. No, no, we shall have time enough to consider after marriage. But why are you so serious, madam?

Narc. Not but I do consent to-morrow shall be the day, Mr. Worthy. But I'm afraid you have not loved me long enough to make our marriage be the town talk, for it is the fashion now to be the town talk, and you know one had as good be out of the world as out of the fashion.

Young Wor. I don't know, madam, what you call town talk, but it has been in the news-letters above a fortnight ago that we were already married. Besides, the last song I made of you has been sung at the music meeting; and you may imagine, madam, I took no little care to let the ladies and the beaus know who it was made on.

Narc. Well, and what said the ladies?

Young Wor. What was most observable, madam, was that while it was singing, my Lady Manlove went out in a great passion.

Narc. Poor jealous animal! On my conscience that charitable creature has such a fund of kind compliance for all young fellows whose love lies dead upon their hands that she has been as great a hindrance to us virtuous women as ever the Bank of England was to city goldsmiths.

Young Wor. The reason of that is, madam, because you virtuous ladies pay no interest. I must confess the principal, our health, is a little securer with you.

Narc. Well, and is not that an advantage worth entering into bonds for? Not but I vow we virtuous devils do love to insult a little; and, to say truth, it looks too credulous and easy in a woman to encourage a man before he has sighed himself to a skeleton.

Young Wor. But heaven be thanked, we are pretty even with you in the end, for the longer you hold us off before marriage, the sooner we fall off after it.

Narc. What, then, you take marriage to be a kind of Jesuit's powder that infallibly cures the fever of love?

Young Wor. It is indeed a Jesuit's powder, for the priests first invented it, and only abstained from it because they knew it had a bitter taste, then gilded it over with a pretended blessing and so palmed it upon the unthinking laity.

Narc. Prithee, don't screw your wit beyond the compass of good manners. Do you think I shall be tuned to matrimony by your railing against it? If you have so little stomach to it, I'll even make you fast a week longer.

Young Wor. Ay, but let me tell you, madam, it is no policy to keep a lover at a thin diet in hopes to raise his appetite on the wedding night, for then

We come like starving beggars to a feast,
Where unconfined we feed with eager haste,
Till each repeated morsel palls the taste.
Marriage gives prodigals a boundless treasure,
Who squander that which might be lasting pleasure,
And women think they ne'er have over measure.

ACT III

SCENE I

SIR WILLIAM WISEWOUD'S *house.*

Enter AMANDA *and* HILLARIA, *meeting.*

Aman. My dear, I have news for you.

Hill. I guess at it and would be fain satisfied of the particulars. Your husband is returned and, I hear, knows nothing of your being alive. Young Worthy has told me of your design upon him.

Aman. It is that I wanted your advice in. What think you of it?

Hill. Oh, I admire it. Next to forgetting your husband, it is the best counsel was ever given you, for under the disguise of mistress you may now take a fair advantage of indulging your love, and the little experience you have had of it already has been just enough not to let you be afraid of a man.

Aman. Will you never leave your mad humor?

Hill. Not till my youth leaves me. Why should women affect ignorance among themselves? When we converse with men, indeed, modesty and good breeding oblige us not to understand what sometimes we can't help thinking of.

Aman. Nay, I don't think the worse of you for what you say, for it is observed that a bragging lover and an over-shy lady are the farthest from what they would seem; the one is as seldom known to receive a favor as the other to resist an opportunity.

Hill. Most women have a wrong sense of modesty, as some men of courage; if you don't fight with all you meet or run from all you see, you are presently thought a coward or an ill woman.

Aman. You say true, and it is as hard a matter nowadays for a woman to know how to converse with men as for a man to know when to draw his sword, for many times both sexes are apt to over-act their parts. To me the rules of virtue have been ever sacred, and I am loath to break them by an unadvised understanding. Therefore, dear Hillaria, help me, for I am at a loss. Can I justify, think you, my intended design upon my husband?

Hill. As how, prithee?

Aman. Why, if I court and conquer him as a mistress, am I not accessory to his violating the bonds of marriage? For, though I am his wife, yet while he loves me not as such, I encourage an unlawful passion, and though the act be safe, yet his intent is criminal. How can I answer this?

Hill. Very easily, for if he doesn't intrigue with you, he will with somebody else in the meantime, and I think you have as much right to his remains as any one.

Aman. Ay, but I am assured the love he will pretend to me is vicious, and it is uncertain that I shall prevent his doing worse elsewhere.

Hill. It is true a certain ill ought not to be done for an uncertain good. But then again, of two evils choose the least, and sure, it is less criminal to let him love you as a mistress than to let him hate you as a wife. If you succeed I suppose you will easily forgive your guilt in the undertaking.

Aman. To say truth, I find no argument yet strong enough to conquer my inclination to it. But is there no danger, think you, of his knowing me?

Hill. Not the least, in my opinion. In the first place, he confidently believes you are dead; then he has not seen you these eight or ten years; besides, you were not above sixteen when he left you: this, with the alteration the smallpox have made in you (though not for the worse) I think are sufficient disguises to secure you from his knowledge.

Aman. Nay, and to this I may add the considerable amendment of my fortune, for when he left me I had only my bare jointure for a subsistence—besides my strange manner of receiving him.

Hill. That's what I would fain be acquainted with.

Aman. I expect further instructions from Young Worthy every moment; then you shall know all, my dear.

Hill. Nay, he will do you no small service, for a thief is the best thief-catcher.

Enter a Servant to Amanda.

Serv. Madam, your servant is below, who says young Mr. Worthy's man waits at your lodgings with earnest business from his master.

Aman. It is well. Come, my dear, I must have your assistance too.

Hill. With all my heart. I love to be at the bottom of a secret, for they say the confidante of any amour has sometimes more pleasure in the observation than the parties concerned in the enjoyment. But methinks you don't look with a good heart upon the business.

Aman. I can't help a little concern in a business of such moment; for though my reason tells me my design must prosper, yet my fears say it were happiness too great. Oh, to reclaim the man I'm bound by heaven to love, to expose the folly of a roving mind in pleasing him with what he seemed to loathe were such a sweet revenge for slighted love, so vast a triumph of rewarded constancy as might persuade the looser part of womankind even to forsake themselves and fall in love with virtue.

Re-enter the Servant to Hillaria.

Serv. Sir Novelty Fashion is below in his coach, madam, and inquires for your ladyship or Madam Narcissa.

Hill. You know my cousin is gone out with my Lady Tattle-tongue. I hope you did not tell him I was within.

Serv. No, madam, I did not know if your ladyship would be spoke with, and therefore came to see.

Hill. Then tell him I went with her.

Serv. I shall, madam. [*Exit Servant.*

Hill. You must know, my dear, I have sent to that fury, Mrs. Flareit, whom this Sir Novelty keeps, and have stung her to some purpose with an account of his passion for my cousin. I owed him a quarrel for that he made between Mr. Worthy and me, and I hope her jealousy will severely revenge it; therefore I sent my cousin out of the way because, unknown to her, her name is at the bottom of my design. Here he comes;

prithee, my dear, let's go down the back stairs and take coach from the garden.

[*Exeunt* Amanda *and* Hillaria.

Re-enter the Servant, conducting Sir Novelty.

Sir Nov. Both the ladies abroad, say you? Is Sir William within?

Serv. Yes, sir. If you please to walk in, I'll acquaint him that you expect him here.

Sir Nov. Do so, prithee, [*Exit Servant.*] and in the meantime let me consider what I have to say to him. Hold! In the first place, his daughter is in love with me. Would I marry her? No! Damme, it is mechanical to marry the woman you love; men of quality should always marry those they never saw. But I hear young Worthy marries her to-morrow, which, if I prevent not, will spoil my design upon her. Let me see—I have it—I'll persuade the old fellow that I would marry her myself, upon which he immediately rejects young Worthy and gives me free access to her. Good! What follows upon that? Opportunity, importunity, resistance, force, entreaty, persisting, doubting, swearing, lying, blushes, yielding, victory, pleasure, indifference—Oh here he comes *in ordine ad.*

Enter Sir William Wisewoud.

Sir Will. Sir Novelty, your servant. Have you any commands for me, sir?

Sir Nov. I have some proposals to make, sir, concerning your happiness and my own, which, perhaps, will surprise you. In a word, sir, I am upon the very brink of matrimony.

Sir Will. It is the best thing you can pursue, sir, considering you have a good estate.

Sir Nov. But whom do you think I intend to marry?

Sir Will. I can't imagine. Dear sir, be brief, lest your delay transport me into a crime I would avoid, which is impatience. Sir, pray go on.

Sir Nov. In fine, sir, it is to your very daughter, the fair Narcissa.

Sir Will. Humph! Pray, sir, how long have you had this in your head?

Sir Nov. Above these two hours, sir.

Sir Will. Very good. Then you haven't slept upon it?

Sir Nov. No, nor shan't sleep for thinking on it. Did not I tell you I would surprise you?

Sir Will. Oh, you have indeed, sir. I am amazed. I am amazed!

Sir Nov. Well, sir, and what think you of my proposal?

Sir Will. Why, truly, sir, I like it not. But if I did, it is now too late; my daughter is disposed of to a gentleman that she and I like very well. At present, sir, I have a little business; if this be all, your humble servant, I am in haste.

Sir Nov. Demme! What an insensible blockhead's this? Hold, sir, do you hear—is this all the acknowledgment you make for the honor I designed you?

Sir Will. Why, truly, sir, it is an honor that I am not ambitious of. In plain terms, I do not like you for a son-in-law.

Sir Nov. Now you speak to the purpose, sir. But, prithee, what are thy exceptions to me?

Sir Will. Why, in the first place, sir, you have too great a passion for your own person to have any for your wife's. In the next place, you take such an extravagant care in the clothing your body that your understanding goes naked for it. Had I a son so dressed, I should take the liberty to call him an egregious fop.

Sir Nov. Egad, thou art a comical old gentleman, and I'll tell thee a secret. Understand then, sir, from me, that all young fellows hate the name of fop as women do the name of whore, but, egad, they both love the pleasure of being so. Nay, faith, and it is as hard a matter for some men to be fops, as you call them, as it is for some women to be whores.

Sir Will. That's pleasant, in faith. Can't any man be a fop or any woman be a whore that has a mind to it?

Sir Nov. No, faith, sir, for let me tell you, it is not the coldness of my Lady Freelove's inclination, but her age and wrinkles that won't let her cuckold her husband, and again it is not Sir John Woudlook's aversion to dress, but his want of a fertile genius that won't let him look like a gentleman. Therefore, in vindication of all well-dressed gentlemen, I intend to write a play where my chiefest character shall be a downright English booby that affects to be a beau, without either genius or foreign education, and to call it in imitation of another famous comedy, *He Would If He Could,* and now, I think, you are answered, sir. Have you any exceptions to my birth or family, pray, sir?

Sir Will. Yes, sir, I have. You seem to me the offspring of more than one man's labor, for certainly no less than a dancing, singing, and fencing master, with a tailor, milliner, perfumer, peruke-maker, and French *valet de chambre* could be at the begetting of you.

Sir Nov. All these have been at the finishing of me since I was made.

Sir Will. That is, heaven made you a man, and they have made a monster of you. And so farewell to you! [*He is going.*

Sir Nov. Hark you, sir, am I to expect no further satisfaction in the proposals I made you?

Sir Will. Sir, nothing makes a man lose himself like passion. Now I presume you

are young, and consequently rash upon a disappointment; therefore to prevent any difference that may arise by repeating my refusal of your suit, I do not think it convenient to hold any further discourse with you.

Sir Nov. Nay, faith, thou shalt stay to hear a little more of my mind first.

Sir Will. Since you press me, sir, I will rather bear with than resist you.

Sir Nov. I doubt, old gentleman, you have such a torrent of philosophy running through your pericranium that it has washed your brains away.

Sir Will. Pray, sir, why do you think so?

Sir Nov. Because you choose a beggarly unaccountable sort of younger-brotherish rake-hell for your son-in-law before a man of quality, estate, good parts, and breeding, demme.

Sir Will. Truly, sir, I know neither of the persons to whom these characters belong; if you please to write their names under them, perhaps I may tell you if they be like or no.

Sir Nov. Why, then, in short, I would have been your son-in-law, and you, it seems, prefer young Worthy before me. Now are your eyes open?

Sir Will. Had I been blind, sir, you might have been my son-in-law, and if you were not blind you would not think that I design my daughter for young Worthy. His brother, I think, may deserve her.

Sir Nov. Then you are not jealous of young Worthy? Humph!

Sir Will. No, really, sir, nor of you neither.

Sir Nov. Give me thy hand; thou art very happy, stop my vitals, for thou dost not see thou art blind. Not jealous of young Worthy? Ha, ha! How now!

Enter Sir Novelty's *Servant with a Porter.*

Serv. Sir, here's a porter with a letter for your honor.

Porter. I was ordered to give it into your own hands, sir, and expect an answer.

Sir Nov. [*reads*]. "Excuse, my dear Sir Novelty, the forced indifference I have shown you, and let me recompense your past sufferings with an hour's conversation after the play at Rosamond's Pond, where you will find an hearty welcome to the arms of your Narcissa!" Unexpected happiness! The arms of your Narcissa! Egad, and when I am there, I'll make myself welcome. Faith, I did not think she was so far gone, neither. But I don't question there are five hundred more in her condition. I have a good mind not to go, faith. Yet, hang it, I will, though only to be revenged of this old fellow! Nay, I'll have the pleasure of making it public, too, for I will give her the music and draw all the town to be witness of my triumph! Where is the lady? [*To the porter.*

Porter. In a hackney coach at the corner of the street.

Sir Nov. Enough, tell her I will certainly be there. [*Exit porter.*] Well, old gentleman, then you are resolved I shall be no kin to you? Your daughter is disposed of? Humph!

Sir Will. You have your answer, sir; you shall be no kin to me.

Sir Nov. Farewell, old philosophy, and do you hear, I would advise you to study nothing but the art of patience. You may have an unexpected occasion for it. Hark you, would it not nettle you damnably to hear my son call you grandfather?

Sir Will. Sir, notwithstanding this provocation, I am calm, but were I like other men, a slave to passion, I should not forbear calling you impertinent! How I swell with rising vexation! Leave me, leave me; go, sir, go, get you out of my house! [*Angrily.*

Sir Nov. Oh, have a care of passion, dear Diogenes. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Will. So! [*Sighing*] At last I have conquered it. Pray, sir, oblige me with your absence [*taking off his hat*]; I protest I am tired with you. Pray leave my house. [*Submissively.*

Sir Nov. Damn your house, your family, your ancestors, your generation, and your eternal posterity. [*Exit.*

Sir Will. Ah! A fair riddance. How I bless myself that it was not in this fool's power to provoke me beyond that serenity of temper which a wise man ought to be master of. How near are men to brutes when their unruly passions break the bounds of reason? And of all passions anger is the most violent, which often puts me in mind of that admirable saying,

He that strives not to stem his anger's tide
Does a mad horse without a bridle ride.

Scene II

The Scene changes to St. James's Park.

Enter Young Worthy *and* Loveless *as from the tavern,* Snap *following.*

Young Wor. What a sweet evening it is. Prithee, Ned, let's walk a little. Look how lovingly the trees are joined since thou wert here, as if nature had designed this walk for the private shelter of forbidden love. [*Several crossing the stage.*

Look, here are some for making use of the conveniency.

Love. But, hark you, friend, are the women as tame and civil as they were before I left the town? Can they endure the smell of tobacco or vouchsafe a man a word with a dirty cravat on?

Young Wor. Ay, that they will, for keep-

ing is almost out of fashion, so that now an honest fellow with a promising back need not fear a night's lodging for bare good-fellowship.

Love. If whoring be so poorly encouraged, methinks the women should turn honest in their own defense.

Young Wor. Faith, I don't find there's a whore the less for it; the pleasure of fornication is still the same. All the difference is, lewdness is not so barefaced as heretofore. Virtue is as much debased as our money, for maidenheads are as scarce as our milled half-crowns, and, faith, *Dei gratia* is as hard to be found in a girl of sixteen as round the brims of an old shilling.

Love. Well, I find, in spite of law and duty, the flesh will get the better of the spirit. But I see no game yet. Prithee, Will, let's go and take the other bumper to enliven assurance that we may come downright to the business.

Young Wor. No, no; what we have in our bellies already, by the help of a little fresh air, will soon be in our pericraniums and work us to a right pitch to taste the pleasures of the night.

Love. The day thou meanest; my day always breaks at sunset. We wise fellows that know the use of life know, too, that the moon lights men to more pleasures than the sun. The sun was meant for the dull soul of business and poor rogues that have a mind to save candles.

Young Wor. Nay, the night was always a friend to pleasure, and that made Diana run a-whoring by the light of her own horns.

Love. Right, and, prithee, what made Daphne run away from Apollo but that he wore so much daylight about his ears?

Young Wor. Ha! Look out, Ned, there's the enemy before you!

Love. Why, then, as Cæsar said, come follow me. [*Exit.*

Young Wor. I hope it is his wife, whom I desired to meet me here that she might take a view of her soldier before she new-mounted him. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Flareit *and her maid.*

Maid. I wonder, madam, Sir Novelty don't come yet. I am so afraid he should see Narcissa and find out the trick of your letter.

Mrs. Flar. No, no! Narcissa is out of the way. I am sure he won't be long, for I heard the hautboys as they passed by me mention his name; I suppose to make the intrigue more fashionable, he intends to give me the music.

Maid. Suppose he do take you for Narcissa. What advantage do you propose by it?

Mrs. Flar. I shall then have a just occasion to quarrel with him for his perfidiousness and so force his pocket to make his peace with me. Besides, my jealousy will not let me rest till I am revenged.

Maid. Jealousy! Why, I have often heard you say you loathed him!

Mrs. Flar. It is my pride, not love, that makes me jealous, for, though I don't love him, yet I am incensed to think he dares love another.

Maid. See, madam, here he is, and the music with him.

Mrs. Flar. Put on your mask and leave me. [*They mask.*

Enter Sir Novelty *with the music.*

Sir Nov. Here, gentlemen, place yourselves on this spot and pray oblige me with a trumpet sonata. [*The musicians prepare to play.*] This taking a man at his first word is a very new way of preserving reputation, stop my vitals. Nay, and secure one too, for now may we enjoy and grow weary of one another before the town can take any notice of us. [Mrs. Flareit *making towards him.*] Ha, this must be she. I suppose, madam, you are no stranger to the contents of this letter?

Mrs. Flar. Dear sir, this place is too public for my acknowledgment, if you please to withdraw to a more private conveniency. [*Exeunt.*

[*The music prepares to play, and all sorts of people gather about it. Enter at one door* Narcissa, Hillaria, Amanda, Elder Worthy, *and* Young Worthy; *at another* Loveless *and* Snap, *who talk to the masks.*

Elder Wor. What say you, ladies? Shall we walk homewards? It begins to be dark.

Young Wor. Prithee, don't be so impatient; it's light enough to hear the music, I'll warrant you.

Aman. Mr. Worthy, you promised me a sight I long for. Is Mr. Loveless among all those?

Young Wor. That's he, madam, a-surveying that masked lady.

Aman. Ha, is it possible! Methinks I read his vices in his person. Can he be insensible even to the smart of pinching poverty? Pray, sir, your hand—I find myself disordered. It troubles me to think I dare not speak to him after so long an absence.

Young Wor. Madam, your staying here may be dangerous; therefore, let me advise you to go home and get all things in order to receive him. About an hour hence will be a convenient time to set my design a-going; till then let me beg you to have a little patience. Give me leave, madam, to see you to your coach.

Aman. I'll not trouble you, sir; yonder's my cousin Welbred; I'll beg his protection. [*Exit.*

[*The music plays, after which* NARCISSA *speaks.*

Narc. I vow it's very fine, considering what dull souls our nation are. I find it is a harder matter to reform their manners than their government or religion.

Elder Wor. Since the one has been so happily accomplished, I know no reason why we should despair of the other. I hope in a little time to see our youth return from travel big with praises of their own country. But come, ladies, the music's done, I suppose. Shall we walk?

Narc. Time enough; why you have no taste of the true pleasures of the park. I'll warrant you hate as much to ridicule others as to hear yourself praised; for my part, I think a little harmless railing's half the pleasure of one's life.

Elder Wor. I don't love to create myself enemies by observing the weakness of other people. I have more faults of my own than I know how to mend.

Narc. Protect me! How can you see such a medley of human stuffs as are here without venting your spleen? Why, look there now, is not it comical to see that wretched creature there with her autumnal face dressed in all the colors of the spring?

Elder Wor. Pray, who is she, madam?

Narc. A thing that won't believe herself out of date, though she was a known woman at the Restoration.

Young Wor. Oh, I know her; it is Mrs. Holdout, one that is proud of being an original of fashionable fornication and values herself mightily for being one of the first mistresses that ever kept her coach publicly in England.

Hill. Pray, who's that impudent young fellow there?

Elder Wor. Oh, that's an eternal fantearer and a constant persecutor of womankind. He had a great misfortune lately.

Narc. Pray, what was it?

Elder Wor. Why, impudently presuming to cuckold a Dutch officer, he had his foreteeth kicked out.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Narc. There's another too, Mr. Worthy; do you know him?

Young Wor. That's Beau Noisy, one that brags of favors from my lady, though refused by her woman; that sups with my lord, and borrows his club of his footman; that beats the watch, and is kicked by his companions; that is one day at court, and the next in jail; that goes to church without religion, is valiant without courage, witty without sense, and drunk without measure.

Elder Wor. A very complete gentleman.

Hill. Prithee, cousin, who's that overshy lady there, that won't seem to understand what that brisk young fellow says to her?

Narc. Why, that's my Lady Slylove; that other ceremonious gentleman is her lover. She is so overmodest that she makes a scruple of shifting herself before her woman, but afterwards makes none of doing it before her gallant.

Young Wor. Hang her, she's a jest to the whole town, for, though she has been the mother of two by-blows, endeavors to appear as ignorant in all company as if she did not know the distinction of sexes.

Narc. Look, look! Mr. Worthy, I vow, there's the Countess of Incog. out of her dishabille, in a high head, I protest.

Young Wor. It is as great a wonder to see her out of an hackney coach as out of debt or——

Narc. Or out of countenance.

Young Wor. That, indeed, she seldom changes, for she is never out of a mask and is so well known in it that when she has a mind to be private she goes barefaced.

Narc. But come, cousin, now let's see what monsters the next walk affords.

Elder Wor. With all my heart; it is in our way home.

Young Wor. Ladies, I must beg your pardon for a moment; yonder comes one I have a little business with; I'll dispatch it immediately and follow you.

Hill. No, no. We'll stay for you.

Narc. You may, if you please, cousin; but I suppose he will hardly thank you for it.

Hill. What, then you conclude it is a woman's business by his promising a quick dispatch!

Young Wor. Madam, in three minutes you shall know the business; if it displease you, condemn me to an eternal absence.

Elder Wor. Come, madam, let me be his security.

Narc. I dare take your word, sir.

[*Exeunt* ELDER WORTHY, HILLARIA, *and* NARCISSA.

Enter SLY, *servant to* YOUNG WORTHY.

Young Wor. Well, how go matters; is she in a readiness to receive him?

Sly. To a hair, sir; every servant has his cue, and all are impatient till the comedy begins.

Young Wor. Stand aside a little and let us watch our opportunities.

Enter SNAP *and* LOVELESS.

Snap [*to a Mask*]. Inquire about half an hour hence for number two at the Gridiron.

Mask. To-morrow with all my heart, but to-night I am engaged to the chaplain of Colonel Thunder's regiment.

Snap. What, will you leave me for a mutton-chop, for that's all he'll give you, I'm sure?

Mask. You are mistaken; faith, he keeps me.

Snap. Not to himself, I'll engage him; yet he may, too, if nobody likes you better than I do. Hark you, child, prithee when was your smock washed?

Mask. Why dost thou pretend to fresh linen that never wore a clean shirt but of thy mother's own washing? [*Goes from him.*

Love. What, no adventure, no game, Snap?

Snap. None, none, sir; I can't prevail with any from the pointhead cloths to the horse-guard whore.

Love. What a pox! Sure the whores can't smell an empty pocket.

Snap. No, no, that's certain, sir; they must see it in our faces.

Sly [*to* Loveless]. My dear boy, how is it? Egad, I am glad thou art come to town. My lady expected you above an hour ago, and I am overjoyed I have found thee. Come, come, come along; she's impatient till she sees you.

Snap. Odsbud, sir, follow him; he takes you for another.

Love. Egad, it looks with the face of an intrigue. I'll humor him. Well, what, shall we go now?

Sly. Ay, ay, now it's pure and dark, you may go undiscovered.

Love. That's what I would do.

Sly. Odsheart, she longs to see thee, and she is a curious fine creature, you rogue! Such eyes, such lips, and such a tongue between them! Ah, the tip of it will set a man's soul on fire!

Love. [*aside*]. The rogue makes me impatient.

Sly. Come, come, the key, the key, the key, you dear rogue!

Snap [*aside*]. Oh, Lord, the key, the key!

Love. The key? Why sh—sh—sh—should y—y—you have it?

Sly. Ay, ay! Quickly, give's it!

Love. Why—what the devil! Sure I haven't lost it. Oh, no, gad, it is not there. What the devil shall we do?

Sly. Oons, never stand fumbling; if you have lost it, we must shoot the lock, I think.

Love. Egad, and so we must, for I haven't it.

Sly. Come, come along, follow me.

Love. Snap, stand by me, you dog.

Snap. Ay, ay, sir.

[*Exeunt* Sly, Loveless, *and* Snap.

Young Wor. Ha, ha! The rogue managed him most dexterously. How greedily he chopped at the bait. What the event will be, heaven knows; but thus far it is pleasant, and since he is safe, I'll venture to divert my company with the story. Poor Amanda, thou well deservest a better husband; thou wert never wanting in thy endeavors to reclaim him; and, faith, considering how a long despair has worn thee,

'Twere pity now thy hopes should not succeed,
This new attempt is *Love's last shift* indeed.

ACT IV

Scene I

The Scene continues.

Enter two Bullies *and* Sir William Wisewoud, *observing them.*

First Bully. Damn me, Jack, let's after him and fight him; it is not to be put up.

Second Bully. No, damn him, nobody saw the affront, and what need we take notice of it?

First Bully. Why, that's true. But, damn me, I have much ado to forbear cutting his throat.

Sir Will. Pray, gentlemen, what's the matter? Why are you in such a passion?

First Bully. What's that to you, sir? What would you have?

Sir Will. I hope, sir, a man may ask a civil question.

First Bully. Damn me, sir, we are men of honor; we dare answer any man.

Sir Will. But why are you angry, gentlemen? Have you received any wrong?

Second Bully. We have been called rascals, sir, have had the lie given us, and had like to have been kicked.

Sir Will. But I hope you were not kicked, gentlemen.

Second Bully. How, sir, we kicked?

Sir Will. Nor do I presume that you are rascals.

First Bully. Blood and thunder, sir, let any man say it that wears a head! We rascals!

Sir Will. Very good. Since then you are not rascals, he rather was one who maliciously called you so. Pray take my advice, gentlemen; never disturb yourselves for any ill your enemy says of you, for from an enemy the world will not believe it. Now you must know, gentlemen, that a flea-bite is to me more offensive than the severest affront any man can offer me.

First Bully. What, and so you would have us put it up! Damn me, sir, don't preach cowardice to us. We are men of valor; you won't find us cowards, sir.

Second Bully. No, sir, we are no cowards, though you are.

First Bully. Hang him, let him alone; I see a coward in his face.

Sir Will. If my face make any reflection, sir, it is against my will.

Second Bully. Prithee, Tom, let's affront him and raise his spleen a little.

Sir Will. Raise my spleen! That's more than any man could ever boast of.

First Bully. You lie.

Sir Will. I am not angry yet; therefore I do not lie, sir. Now, one of us must lie; I do not lie, *ergo*,——

First Bully. Damn me, sir, have a care! Don't give me the lie. I shan't take it, sir.

Sir Will. I need not, sir. You give it yourself.

First Bully. Well, sir, what then? If I make bold with myself, every old puppy shall not pretend to do it.

Sir Will. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

First Bully. Damn me, sir, what do you laugh at?

Sir Will. To let you see that I am no puppy, sir, for puppies are brutes; now brutes have not risibility, but I laugh; therefore I am no puppy. Ha, ha!

First Bully. Blood and thunder, sir, dare you fight?

Sir Will. Not in cool blood, sir, and I confess it is impossible to make me angry.

Second Bully. I'll try that. Hark you, don't you know you are a sniveling old cuckold?

Sir Will. No, really, sir.

Second Bully. Why, then, I know you to be one.

Sir Will. Look you, sir, my reason weighs this injury, which is so light it will not raise my anger in the other scale.

First Bully. Oons! what a tame old prig's this! I'll give you better weight, then. I know who got all your children.

Sir Will. Not so well as my wife, I presume. Now, she tells me it was myself, and I believe her, too.

First Bully. She tells you so because the poor rogue that got them is not able to keep them.

Sir Will. Then my keeping them is charity.

First Bully. Blood and thunder, sir, this is an affront to us not to be angry after all these provocations. Damn me, Jack, let's souse him in the canal.

As they lay hold on him enter Elder Worthy, Young Worthy, Narcissa, *and* Hillaria.

Young Wor. S'death, what's here? Sir William in the rogues' hands that affronted the ladies. Oh, forbear, forbear!

[*Strikes them.*

Elder Wor. So, gentlemen, I thought you had fair warning before; now you shall pay for it.

Enter three or four Sentinels.

Hark you, honest soldiers, pray do me the favor to wash these rascals in the canal, and there's a guinea for your trouble.

Bullies. Damn me, sir, we shall expect satisfaction.

[*Exeunt Sentinels, dragging the* Bullies.

Sir Will. Oh, dear gentlemen, I am obliged to you, for I was just going to the canal myself, if you had not come as you did.

Elder Wor. Pray, sir, what had you done to them?

Sir Will. Why, hearing the music from my parlor window and being invited by the sweetness of the evening, I e'en took a walk to see if I could meet with you, when the first objects that presented themselves were these bullies, threatening to cut somebody's throat. Now, I, endeavoring to allay their fury, occasioned their giving me scurrilous language, and finding they could not make me as angry as themselves, they offered to fling me into the water.

Elder Wor. I am glad we stepped to your deliverance.

Sir Will. Oh, I thank you, gentlemen. I'll e'en go home and recover my fright. Good night, good night to you all. [*Exit.*

Elder Wor. Harry, see Sir William safe to his lodging. [*To his servant*] Well, ladies, I believe it's time for us to be walking, too.

Hill. No, pray let me engage you to stay a little longer. Yonder comes Sir Novelty and his mistress in pursuance of the design I told you of. Pray have a little patience, and you will see the effect on it.

Elder Wor. With all my heart, madam.

[*They stand aside.*

Enter Sir Novelty *embracing* Mrs. Flareit, *masked.*

Sir Nov. Generous creature! This is an unexampled condescension to meet my passion with such early kindness. Thus let me pay my soft acknowledgments.

[*Kisses her hand.*

Hill. You must know he has mistaken her for another.

Mrs. Flar. For heaven's sake, let me go. If Hillaria should be at home before me, I am ruined forever.

Narc. Hillaria! What does she mean?

Sir Nov. Narcissa's reputation shall be ever safe while my life and fortune can protect it.

Narc. O, gad, let me go! Does the impudent creature take my name upon her! I'll pull off her head-clothes.

Hill. Oh, fie, cousin, what an ungenteel revenge would that be! Have a little patience.

Narc. Oh, I am in a flame.

[*Throwing back her hoods.*

Mrs. Flar. But will you never see that common creature Flareit more?

Sir Nov. Never, never! Feed on such homely fare after so rich a banquet?

Mrs. Flar. Nay, but you must hate her, too.

Sir Nov. That I did long ago for her stinking breath! It is true, I have been led away, but I detest a strumpet. I am informed she keeps a fellow under my nose, and for that reason I would not make the settlement I lately gave her some hopes of. But even let her please herself, for now I am wholly yours.

Mrs. Flar. Oh, now you charm me! But will you love me ever?

Sir Nov. Will you be ever kind?

Mrs. Flar. Be sure you never see Flareit more.

Sir Nov. When I do, may this soft hand revenge my perjury.

Mrs. Flar. So it shall, villain!

[*Strikes him a box on the ear and unmasks.*

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Nov. Flareit! The devil!

Mrs. Flar. What, will nothing but a maidenhead go down with you! Thou miserable, conceited wretch! Foh, my breath stinks, does it! I'm a homely puss, a strumpet not worth your notice! Devil, I'll be revenged.

Sir Nov. Damn your revenge. I'm sure I feel it. [*Holding his cheek.*

Narc. Really, Sir Novelty, I am obliged to you for your kind thoughts of me and your extraordinary care of my reputation.

Sir Nov. 'Sdeath, she here! Exposed to half the town! Well, I must brazen it out, however. [*Walks unconcerned.*

Mrs. Flar. What, no pretence, no evasion, now!

Sir Nov. There's no occasion for any, madam.

Mrs. Flar. Come, come, swear you knew me all this while.

Sir Nov. No, faith, madam, I did not know you, for if I had you would not have found me so furious a lover.

Mrs. Flar. Furies and hell! Dares the monster own his guilt? This is beyond all sufferance. Thou wretch, thou thing, thou animal, that I—to the everlasting forfeiture of my sense and understanding—have made a man! For till thou knewest me, it was doubted if thou wert of human kind. And dost thou think I'll suffer such a worm as thee to turn against me? No! When I do, may I be cursed to thy embraces all my life and never know a joy beyond thee.

Sir Nov. Why, wh—wh—what will your ladyship's fury do, madam? [*Smiling.*

Mrs. Flar. Only change my lodging, sir.

Sir Nov. I shall keep mine, madam, that you may know where to find me when your fury is over. You see I am good natured.

[*Walks by her.*

Mrs. Flar. [*aside*]. This bravery's affected. I know he loves me, and I'll pierce him to the quick. I have yet a surer way to fool him.

Hill. Methinks the knight bears it bravely.

Narc. I protest the lady weeps.

Young Wor. She knows what she does, I'll warrant you.

Elder Wor. Ay, ay, the fox is a better politician than the lion.

Mrs. Flar. [*with tears in her eyes. Aside*]. Now, woman.—Sir Novelty, pray, sir, let me speak with you.

Sir Nov. Ay, madam.

Mrs. Flar. Before we part—for I find I have irrecoverably lost your love—let me beg of you that from this hour you ne'er will see me more or make any new attempts to deceive my easy temper, for I find my nature's such I shall believe you, though to my utter ruin.

Sir Nov. [*aside*]. Pray heaven she be in earnest.

Mrs. Flar. One thing more, sir. Since our first acquaintance you have received several letters from me. I hope you will be so much a gentleman as to let me have 'em again. Those I have of yours shall be returned tomorrow morning. And now, sir, wishing you as much happiness in her you love as you once pretended I could give you, I take of you my everlasting leave. Farewell, and may your next mistress love you till I hate you. [*She is going.*

Sir Nov. [*aside*]. So! Now must I seem to persuade her.—Nay, prithee, my dear! Why do you struggle so? Whither would you go?

Mrs. Flar. Pray, sir, give me leave to pass; I can't bear to stay. [*Crying.*

Sir Nov. What is it that frightens you?

Mrs. Flar. Your barbarous usage. Pray, let me go.

Sir Nov. Nay, if you are resolved, madam, I won't press you against your will. Your humble servant. [*He leaves her.—Aside*] And a happy riddance, stop my vitals.

[Mrs. Flareit *looks back.*

Mrs. Flar. [*aside*]. Ha, not move to call me back! So unconcerned! Oh, I could tear my flesh, stab every feature in this dull, decaying face that wants a charm to hold him. Damn him! I loathe him too! But shall my pride now fall from such an height and bear the torture unrevenged? No! My very soul's on fire, and nothing but the villain's blood shall quench it. Devil, have at thee.

[*Snatches* Young Worthy's *sword and runs at him.*

Young Wor. Have a care, sir.

Sir Nov. Let her alone, gentlemen; I'll warrant you.

[*He draws and stands upon his guard.* YOUNG WORTHY *takes the sword from her and holds her.*

Mrs. Flar. Prevented! Oh, I shall choke with boiling gall. Oh, oh, umh! Let me go! I'll have his blood, his blood, his blood!

Sir Nov. Let her come, let her come, gentlemen.

Mrs. Flar. Death and vengeance, am I become his sport? He's pleased, and smiles to see me rage the more! But he shall find no fiend in hell can match the fury of a disappointed woman! Scorned, slighted, dismissed without a parting pang! Oh, torturing thought! May all the racks mankind e'er gave our easy sex, neglected love, decaying beauty, and hot raging lust light on me if e'er I cease to be the eternal plague of his remaining life, nay, after death,

When his black soul lies howling in despair,
I'll plunge to hell and be his torment there.

[*Exit in a fury.*

Elder Wor. Sure, Sir Novelty, you never loved this lady, if you are so indifferent at parting.

Sir Nov. Why, faith, Tom, to tell you the truth, her jealousy has been so very troublesome and expensive to me of late that I have these three months sought an opportunity to leave her, but, faith, I had always more respect to my life than to let her know it before.

Hill. Methinks, Sir Novelty, you had very little respect to her life when you drew upon her.

Sir Nov. Why, what would you have had me done, madam? Complimented her with my naked bosom? No, no! Look you, madam, if she had made any advances, I could have disarmed her in a second at the very first pass. But come, ladies, as we walk, I'll beg your judgments in a particular nice fancy that I intend to appear in the very first week the court is quite out of mourning.

Elder Wor. With all my heart, Sir Novelty. Come, ladies, considering how little rest you'll have to-morrow night, I think it were charity not to keep you up any longer.

Young Wor. Nay, as for that matter, the night before a wedding is as unfit to sleep in as the night following. Imagination's a very troublesome bedfellow. Your pardon, ladies, I only speak for myself.

Elder Wor. [*to his Servant*]. See the coaches ready at St. James's gate. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

AMANDA'S *house.*

Enter two Servants.

First Serv. Come, come, make haste. Is the supper and the music ready?

Second Serv. It is, it is. Well, is he come?

First Serv. Ay, ay. I came before to tell my lady the news. That rogue Sly managed him rarely; he has been this half hour pretending to pick the lock of the garden door. Well, poor lady, I wish her good luck with him, for she's certainly the best mistress living. Hark you, is the wine strong as she ordered it? Be sure you ply him home, for he must have two or three bumpers to qualify him for her design. See, here he comes. Away to your post. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LOVELESS, *conducted by* SLY, SNAP *stealing after them.*

Love. Where the devil will this fellow lead me? Nothing but silence and darkness! Sure the house is haunted and he has brought me to face the spirit at his wonted hour.

Sly. There, there, in, in. Slip on your night gown and refresh yourself. In the meantime, I'll acquaint my lady that you are here. [*Exit.*

Love. Snap!

Snap. Ay, ay, sir, I'll warrant you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The Scene changes to an ante-chamber. A table, light, a night gown, and a peruke lying by. They re-enter.

Love. Ha, what sweet lodgings are here? Where can this end?

Snap. Egad, sir, I long to know. Pray heaven we are not deluded hither to be starved. Methinks I wish I had brought the remnants of my dinner with me.

Love. Hark, I hear somebody coming. Hide yourself, rascal. I would not have you seen.

Snap. Well, sir, I'll line this trench in case of your being in danger.

[*Gets under the table.*

Love. Ha, this night gown and peruke don't lie here for nothing. I'll make myself agreeable. I have balked many a woman in my time for want of a clean shirt.

[*He puts them on.*

Enter Servants with a supper, after them AMANDA'S *woman.*

Love. Ha, a supper! Heaven send it be no vision! If the meat be real, I shall be-

lieve the lady may prove flesh and blood. Now am I damnably puzzled to know whether this be she or not? Madam—

[*He bows.*

Woman. Sir, my lady begs your pardon for a moment.

Love. Hm, her lady! Good.

Woman. She's unfortunately detained by some female visitors, which she will dispatch with all the haste imaginable. In the meantime be pleased to refresh yourself with what the house affords. Pray, sir, sit down.

Love. Not alone. Madam, you must bear me company.

Woman. To oblige you, sir, I'll exceed my commission.

Snap [*under the table*]. Was there ever so unfortunate a dog! What the devil put it in my head to hide myself before supper? Why, this is worse than being locked into a closet while another man's a-bed with my wife! I suppose my master will take as much care of me, too, as I should of him if I were in his place.

Woman. Sir, my humble service to you.

[*Drinks.*

Love. Madam, your humble servant. I'll pledge you. [*Aside to* SNAP] Snap, when there's any danger I'll call you; in the meantime, lie still, do you hear?

Snap. Egad, I'll shift for myself then. [*He snatches a flask unseen*] So now I am armed, defiance to all danger!

Love. Madam, your lady's health.

Snap. Ay, ay, let it go 'round, I say.

[*Drinks.*

Woman. Well, really, sir, my lady's very happy that she has got loose from her relations, for they were always teasing her about you; but she defies them all now. Come, sir, success to both your wishes.

[*Drinks.*

Love. Give me a glass. Methinks this health inspires me. My heart grows lighter for the weight of wine. Here, madam—prosperity to the man that ventures most to please her.

Woman. What think you of a song to support this gaiety?

Love. With all my heart. [*A song here*] You have obliged me, madam. [*Aside*] Egad, I like this girl. She takes off her glass so feelingly I am half persuaded she's of a thirsty love. If her lady don't make a little haste, I shall present my humble service to her.

Enter a Servant, who whispers to AMANDA'S WOMAN.

Woman. Sir, I ask your pardon. My lady has some commands for me; I will return immediately. [*Exit.*

Love. Your servant. Methinks this is a very new method of intriguing.

Snap. Pray heaven it be new, for the old way commonly ended in a good beating. But a pox of danger, I say, and so here's good luck to you, sir.

Love. Take heed, rogue, you don't get drunk and discover yourself.

Snap. It must be with a fresh flask, then, for this is expired *supernaculum.*

Love. Lie close, you dog. I hear somebody coming. I am impatient till I see this creature. This wine has armed me against all thoughts of danger. Pray heaven she be young, for then she can't want beauty. Ha, here she comes! Now, never-failing impudence assist me.

Enter AMANDA, *loosely dressed.*

Aman. Where's my love? Oh, let me fly into his arms and live forever there.

Love. My life, my soul! [*Runs and embraces her*] By heaven, a tempting creature. Melting, soft, and warm as my desire. Oh, that I could hide my face forever thus, that undiscovered I might reap the harvest of a ripe desire without the lingering pains of growing love. [*He kisses her hand.*

Aman. Look up, my lord, and bless me with a tender look and let my talking eyes inform thee how I have languished for thy absence.

Love. Let's retire and chase away our fleeting cares with the raptures of untired love.

Aman. Bless me, your voice is strangely altered. Ha, defend me! Who's this? Help, help, within there!

Love. So, I am discovered! A pox on my tattling that I could not hold my tongue till I got to her bed chamber.

Enter SLY *and other Servants.*

Sly. Did your ladyship call help, madam? What's the matter?

Aman. Villain! Slave! Who's this? What ruffian have you brought me here? Dog, I'll have you murdered!

[SLY *looks in his face.*

Sly. Bless me! Oh, Lord! Dear madam, I beg your pardon; as I hope to be saved, madam, it is a mistake. I took him for Mr.——

Aman. Be dumb! Eternal blockhead! Here, take this fellow, toss him in a blanket, and let him be turned out of my doors immediately.

Sly. Oh, pray! Dear madam, for heaven's sake, I am a ruined man.

Snap [*aside*]. Ah, Snap, what will become of thee? Thou art fallen into the hands of a tigress that has lost her whelp. I have no hopes but in my master's impudence. Heaven strengthen it.

Aman. I'll hear no more. Away with

him! [*Exeunt the servants with* Sly. Now, sir, for you. I expected——

Love. A man, madam, did you not?

Aman. Not a stranger, sir, but one that has a right and title to that welcome which by mistake has been given to you.

Love. Not a husband, I presume? He would not have been so privately conducted to your chamber and in the dark, too.

Aman. Whoever it was, sir, it is not your business to examine. But if you would have civil usage, pray be gone.

Love. To be used civilly, I must stay, madam. There can be no danger with so fair a creature.

Aman. I doubt you are mad, sir.

Love. While my senses have such luscious food before them, no wonder if they are in some confusion, each striving to be foremost at the banquet, and sure my greedy eyes will starve the rest. [*Approaching her.*

Aman. Pray, sir, keep your distance lest your feeling, too, be gratified.

Snap [*aside*]. Oh, Lord, I would I were a hundred leagues off at sea.

Love. Then briefly thus, madam: Know I like and love you. Now if you have so much generosity as to let me know what title my pretended rival has to your person or your inclinations, perhaps the little hopes I then may have of supplanting him may make me leave your house. If not, my love shall still pursue you, though to the hazard of my life, which I shall not easily resign while this sword can guard it, madam.

Aman. [*aside*]. Oh, were this courage shown but in a better cause, how worthy were the man that owned it!—What is it, sir, that you propose by this unnecessary trifling? Know, then, that I did expect a lover, a man perhaps more brave than you, one that if present would have given you a shorter answer to your question.

Love. I am glad to hear he's brave, however; it betrays no weakness in your choice. But if you still preserve or raise the joys of love, remove him from your thoughts a moment and in his room receive a warmer heart, a heart that must admire you more than he because my passion's of a fresher date.

Aman. What do you take me for?

Love. A woman, and the most charming of your sex, one whose pointed eyes declare you formed for love, and though your words are flinty, your every look and motion all confess there's a secret fire within you which must sparkle when the steel of love provokes it. Come, now pull away your hand to make me hold it faster.

Aman. Nay, now you are rude, sir.

Love. If love be rudeness, let me be impudent. When we are familiar, rudeness will be love. No woman ever thought a lover rude after she had once granted him the favor.

Aman. Pray, sir, forbear.

Love. How can I when my desire's so violent? Oh, let me snatch the rosy dew from those distilling lips and as you see your power to charm so chide me with your pity. Why do you thus cruelly turn away your face? I own the blessing's worth an age's expectation, but if refused till merited, it is esteemed a debt. Would you oblige your lover, let loose your early kindness?

Aman. I shall not take your counsel, sir, while I know a woman's early kindness is as little sign of her generosity as her generosity is a sign of her discretion. Nor would I have you believe I am so ill provided for that I need listen to any man's first addresses.

Love. Why, madam, would you not drink the first time you had a thirst?

Aman. Yes, but not before I had.

Love. If you can't drink, yet you may kiss the cup, and that may give you inclination.

Aman. Your pardon, sir, I drink out of nobody's glass but my own. As the man I love confines himself to me, so my inclination keeps me true to him.

Love. That's a cheat imposed upon you by your own vanity, for when your back's turned your very chambermaid sips of your leavings and becomes your rival. Constancy in love is all a cheat; women of your understanding know it. The joys of love are only great when they are new, and to make them lasting we must often change.

Aman. Suppose it were a fresh lover I now expected.

Love. Why, then, madam, your expectation's answered, for I must confess I don't take you for an old acquaintance, though somewhere I have seen a face not much unlike you. Come, your arguments are vain, for they are so charmingly delivered they but inspire me the more, as blows in battle raise the brave man's courage. Come, everything pleads for me: your beauty, wit, time, place, opportunity, and my own excess of raging passion.

Aman. Stand off—distant as the globes of heaven and earth, that like a falling star I may shoot with greater force into your arms and think it heaven to lie expiring there. [*She runs into his arms.*

Snap [*aside*]. Ah, ah, ah! Rogue, the day's our own.

Love. Thou sweetest, softest creature heaven ever formed! Thus let me twine myself about thy beauteous limbs till, struggling with the pangs of painful bliss, motionless and mute we yield to conquering love, both vanquished and both victors.

Aman. [*aside*]. Can all this heat be real? Oh, why has hateful vice such power to

charm while poor, abandoned virtue lies neglected?

Love. Come, let us surfeit on our new-born raptures. Let's waken sleeping nature with delight, till we may justly say: Now, now, we live!

Aman. Come on, let's indulge the transports of our present bliss and bid defiance to our future change of fate. Who waits there?

Enter Amanda's *woman.*

Aman. Bring me word immediately if my apartment's ready, as I ordered it. Oh, I am charmed; I have found the man to please me now, one that can and dares maintain the noble rapture of a lawless love. I own myself a libertine, a mortal foe to that dull thing called virtue, that mere disease of sickly nature. Pleasure's the end of life, and while I'm mistress of myself and fortune, I will enjoy it to the height. Speak freely then—not that I love, like other women, the nauseous pleasure of a little flattery—but answer me like a man that scorns a lie: Does my face invite you, sir? May I, from what you see of me, propose a pleasure to myself in pleasing you?

Love. By heaven, you may. I have seen all beauties that the sun shines on, but never saw the sun out-shined before; I have measured half the world in search of pleasure, but not returning home, had ne'er been happy.

Aman. Spoken like the man I wish might love me. [*Aside*] Pray heaven his words prove true.—Be sure you never flatter me, and when my person tires you, confess it freely. For change whenever you will, I'll change as soon; but while we chance to meet, still let it be with raging fire. No matter how soon it dies, provided the small time it lasts it burn the fiercer.

Love. Oh, would the blinded world, like us, agree to change, how lasting might the joys of love be! For thus beauty, though stale to one, might somewhere else be new, and while this man were blessed in leaving what he loathed, another were new-ravished in receiving what he ne'er enjoyed.

Re-enter Amanda's Woman.

Woman. Madam, everything is according to your order.

Love. Oh, lead me to the scene of unsupportable delight, rack me with pleasures never known before, till I lie gasping with convulsive passion. This night let us be lavish to our unbounded wishes.

Give all our stock at once to raise the fire,
And revel to the height of loose desire.

[*Exeunt.*

Woman. Ah, what a happy creature's my lady now! There's many an unsatisfied wife about town would be glad to have her husband as wicked as my master upon the same terms my lady has him. Few women, I'm afraid, would grudge an husband the laying out his stock of love that could receive such considerable interest for it! Well, now shan't I take one wink of sleep for thinking how they'll employ their time to-night. Faith, I must listen if I were to be hanged for it.

[*She listens at the door.*

Snap [*aside*]. So! My master's provided for; therefore it is time for me to take care of myself. I have no mind to be locked out of my lodging. I fancy there's room for two in the maid's bed as well as my lady's. This same flask was plaguey strong wine. I find I shall storm if she don't surrender fairly.—By your leave, damsel.

Woman. Bless me! Who's this? Oh, Lord, what would you have? Who are you?

Snap. One that has a right and title to your body, my master having already taken possession of your lady's.

Woman. Let me go, or I'll cry out.

Snap. You lie, you dare not disturb your lady. But the better to secure you, thus I stop your mouth.

[*Kisses her.*

Woman. Humph! Lord bless me, is the devil in you, tearing one's things!

Snap. Then show me your bed-chamber.

Woman. The devil shall have you first.

Snap. He shall have us both together, then. Here will I fix [*Takes her about the neck*] just in this posture till to-morrow morning. In the meantime, when you find your inclination stirring, prithee give me a call, for at present I am very sleepy.

[*He seems to sleep.*

Woman. Foh, how he stinks! [*He belches*] Ah, what a whiff was there. The rogue's as drunk as a sailor with a twelve-month's arrears in his pocket, or a Jacobite upon a day of ill news. I'll ha' nothing to say to him. Let me see, how shall I get rid of him? Oh, I have it. I'll soon make him sober, I'll warrant him.—So ho, Mr. What-do-y'-call-'em, where do you intend to lie to-night?

Snap. Hm, why, where you lay last night, unless you change your lodging.

Woman. Well, for once I'll take pity of you. Make no noise, but put out the candles and follow me softly for fear of disturbing my lady.

Snap. I'll warrant you there's no fear of spoiling her music while we are playing the same tune.

SCENE IV

The Scene changes to a dark entry, and they re-enter.

Woman. Where are you? Lend me your hand.

Snap. Here! Here, make haste, my dear concupiscence.

Woman. Hold! Stand there a little, while I open the door gently without waking the footmen.

[*She feels about and opens a trap door.*

Woman. Come along softly, this way.

Snap. Whereabouts are you?

Woman. Here, here, come straight forward.

[*He goes forward and falls into the cellar.*

Snap. Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! I have broke my neck.

Woman. I am glad to hear him say so; however I should be loath to be hanged for him. How do you, sir?

Snap. Do you, sir? I am a league under ground.

Woman. Whereabouts are you?

Snap. In hell, I think.

Woman. No, no, you are but in the road to it, I dare say. Ah, dear, why will you follow lewd women at this rate, when they lead you to the very gulf of destruction? I knew you would be swallowed up at last. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Snap. Ah, you sneering whore!

Woman. Shall I fetch you a prayer-book, sir, to arm you against the temptations of the flesh?

Snap. No, you need but show your own damned ugly face to do that. Hark you, either help me out or I'll hang myself and swear you murdered me.

Woman. Nay, if you are so bloody-minded, good night to you, sir.

[*She offers to shut the door over him, and he catches hold on her.*

Snap. Ah, ah, ah! Have I caught you! Egad, we'll pig together, now.

Woman. Oh, Lord! Pray let me go, and I'll do anything.

Snap. And so you shall before I part with you. [*Pulls her in to him*] And now, master, my humble service to you.

[*He pulls the door over them.*

ACT V

SCENE I

SIR WILLIAM WISEWOUD'S *house.*

Enter ELDER WORTHY, YOUNG WORTHY, *and a Lawyer with writing.*

Elder Wor. Are the ladies ready?

Young Wor. Hillaria is just gone up to hasten her cousin, and Sir William will be here immediately.

Elder Wor. But hark you, brother, I have considered of it, and pray let me oblige you not to pursue your design upon his five thousand pounds; for, in short, it is no better than a cheat and what a gentleman should scorn to be guilty of. Is not it sufficient that I consent to your wronging him of his daughter?

Young Wor. Your pardon, brother, I can't allow that a wrong, for his daughter loves me; her fortune, you know, he has nothing to do with, and it's a hard case a young woman shall not have the disposal of her heart. Love's a fever of the mind which nothing but our own wishes can assuage, and I don't question but we shall find marriage a very cooling cordial. And as to the five thousand pounds, it is no more than what he has endeavored to cheat his niece of.

Elder Wor. What do you mean? I take him for an honest man.

Young Wor. Oh, very honest! As honest as an old agent to a new-raised regiment. No, faith, I'll say that for him, he will not do an ill thing unless he gets by it. In a word, this so very honest Sir William, as you take him to be, has offered me the refusal of your mistress, and upon condition I will secure him five thousand pounds upon my day of marriage with her, he will secure me her person and ten thousand pounds, the remaining part of her fortune. There's a guardian for you! What think you now, sir?

Elder Wor. Why, I think he deserves to be served in the same kind. I find age and avarice are inseparable! Therefore even make what you can of him, and I will stand by you. But hark you, Mr. Forge, are you sure it will stand good in law, if Sir William signs the bond?

Lawyer. In any court in England, sir.

Elder Wor. Then there's your fifty pieces, and if it succeeds, here are as many more in the same pocket to answer them. But mum—here comes Sir William and the ladies.

Enter SIR WILLIAM WISEWOUD, HILLARIA, *and* NARCISSA.

Sir Will. Good morrow, gentlemen! Mr. Worthy, give you joy! Odso! If my heels were as light as my heart, I should ha' much ado to forbear dancing. Here, here, take her, man. [*Gives him* NARCISSA'S *hand*] She's yours, and so is her thousand pounds a year, and my five thousand pounds shall be yours, too.

Young Wor. [*aside*]. You must ask me leave first.

Sir Will. Odso! Is the lawyer come?

Elder Wor. He is, and all the writings are ready, sir.

Sir Will. Come, come, let's see, man! What's this! Od, this law is a plaguey, troublesome thing, for nowadays it won't let a man give away his own without repeating the particulars five hundred times over; when, in former times, a man might have held his title to twenty thousand pounds a year in the compass of a horn-book.

Lawyer. That is, sir, because there are more knaves nowadays, and this age is more treacherous and distrustful than heretofore.

Sir Will. That is, sir, because there are more lawyers than heretofore. But come, what's this, prithee?

Lawyer. These are the old writings of your daughter's fortune; this is Mr. Worthy's settlement upon her, and this, sir, is your bond for five thousand pounds to him. There wants nothing but filling up the blanks with the parties' names. If you please, sir, I'll do it immediately.

Sir Will. Do so.

Lawyer. May I crave your daughter's Christian name? The rest I know, sir.

Sir Will. Narcissa! Prithee, make haste.

Young Wor. [*aside to the lawyer*]. You know your business.

Lawyer. I'll warrant you, sir.

[*He sits to write.*

Sir Will. Mr. Worthy, methinks your brother does not relish your happiness as he should do. Poor man! I'll warrant he wishes himself in his brother's condition.

Young Wor. Not I, I'll assure you, sir.

Sir Will. Niece, niece! Have you no pity? Prithee, look upon him a little! Od! He's a pretty young fellow. I am sure he loves you, or he would not have frequented my house so often. Do you think his brother could not tell my daughter his own story without his assistance? Pshaw—waw! I tell you, you were the beauty that made him so assiduous. Come, come, give him your hand, and he'll soon creep into your heart, I'll warrant you. Come, say the word, and make him happy.

Hill. What, to make myself miserable, sir, marry a man without an estate?

Sir Will. Hang an estate! True love's beyond all riches! It is all dirt, mere dirt! Besides, haven't you fifteen thousand pounds to your portion?

Hill. I doubt, sir, you would be loath to give him your daughter, though her fortune's larger.

Sir Will. 'Od, if he loved her but half so well as he loves you, he should have her for a word speaking.

Hill. But, sir, this asks some consideration.

Narc. You see, Mr. Worthy, what an extraordinary kindness my father has for you.

Young Wor. Ay, madam, and for your cousin, too. But I hope with a little of your assistance we shall both be able very shortly to return it.

Narc. Nay, I was always ready to serve Hillaria, for heaven knows I only marry to revenge her quarrel to my father. I cannot forgive his offering to sell her.

Young Wor. Oh, you need not take such pains, madam, to conceal your passion for me; you may own it without a blush upon your wedding day.

Narc. My passion! When did you hear me acknowledge any? If I thought you could believe me guilty of such a weakness, though after I had married you, I would never look you in the face.

Young Wor. A very pretty humor this, faith. [*Aside*] What a world of unnecessary sins have we two to answer for? For she has told more lies to conceal her love than I have sworn false oaths to promote it.—Well, madam, at present I'll content myself with your giving me leave to love.

Narc. Which if I don't give, you'll take, I suppose.

Hill. Well, uncle, I won't promise you, but I'll go to church and see them married; when we come back, it is ten to one but I surprise you where you least think on.

Sir Will. Why, that's well said. Mr. Worthy, now, now's your time. Od, I have so fired her, it is not in her power to deny you, man. To her, to her! I warrant her thy own, boy! You'll keep your word, five thousand pounds upon the day of marriage.

Young Wor. I'll give you my bond upon demand, sir.

Sir Will. Oh, I dare take your word, sir. Come, lawyer, have you done? Is all ready?

Lawyer. All, sir. This is your bond to Mr. Worthy. Will you be pleased to sign that first, sir?

Sir Will. Ay, ay. Let's see: "The condition of this obligation——" [*He reads*] Hm—mm—— Come, lend me the pen. [*Signs*] There, Mr. Worthy, I deliver this as my act and deed to you, and heaven send you a good bargain. Niece, will you witness it? [*Which she does*] Come, lawyer, your fist, too. [*The lawyer witnesses it.*

Lawyer. Now, sir, if you please to sign the jointure.

Elder Wor. Come on. Sir William, I deliver this to you for the use of your daughter. Madam, will you give yourself the trouble once more. [Hillaria *sets her hand*] Come, sir. [*The lawyer does the same*] So now let a coach be called as soon as you please, sir.

Sir Will. You may save that charge; I saw your own at the door.

Elder Wor. Your pardon, sir, that would

make our business too public, for which reason, Sir William, I hope you will excuse our not taking you along with us.

[*Exit a Servant.*

Sir Will. Ay, ay, with all my heart. The more privacy, the less expense. But, pray, what time may I expect you back again, for Amanda has sent to me for the writings of her husband's estate? I suppose she intends to redeem the mortgage, and I am afraid she will keep me there till dinner time.

Young Wor. Why, about that time she has obliged me to bring some of her nearest friends to be witnesses of her good or evil fortune with her husband. Methinks I long to know her success; if you please, Sir William, we'll meet you there.

Sir Will. With all my heart. [*Enter a servant*] Well, is the coach come?

Serv. It is at the door, sir.

Sir Will. Come, gentlemen, no ceremony. Your time's short.

Elder Wor. Your servant, Sir William.

[*Exeunt* ELDER WORTHY, YOUNG WORTHY, NARCISSA, *and* HILLARIA.

Sir Will. So! Here's five thousand pounds got with a wet finger! This it is to read mankind. I knew a young lover would never think he gave too much for his mistress. Well, if I don't suddenly meet with some misfortune, I shall never be able to bear this tranquillity of mind. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

The Scene changes to AMANDA'S *house.*

Enter AMANDA *sola.*

Aman. Thus far my hopes have all been answered, and my disguise of vicious love has charmed him even to a madness of impure desire. But now I tremble to pull off the mask, lest bare-faced virtue should fright him from my arms forever. Yet sure there are charms in virtue, nay, stronger and more pleasing far than hateful vice can boast of! Else why have holy martyrs perished for its sake? While lewdness ever gives severe repentance and unwilling death! Good heaven inspire my heart and hang upon my tongue the force of truth and eloquence, that I may lure this wandering falcon back to love and virtue. He comes, and now my dreaded task begins.

Enter LOVELESS *in new clothes.*

Aman. How fare you, sir? Do you not already think yourself confined? Are you not tired with my easy love?

Love. Oh, never, never! You have so filled my thoughts with pleasures past that but to reflect on them is still new rapture to my soul, and the bliss must last while I have life or memory.

Aman. No flattery, sir! I loved you for your plain dealing; and to preserve my good opinion, tell me, what think you of the grape's persuading juice? Come, speak freely, would not the next tavern-bush put all this out of your head?

Love. Faith, madam, to be free with you, I am apt to think you are in the right on it, for though love and wine are two very fine tunes, yet they make no music if you play them both together; separately they ravish us. Thus the mistress ought to make room for the bottle, the bottle for the mistress, and both to wait the call of inclination.

Aman. That's generously spoken. I have observed, sir, in all your discourse you confess something of a man that has thoroughly known the world. Pray give me leave to ask you of what condition you are whence you came.

Love. Why, in the first place, madam, by birth I am a gentleman; by ill friends, good wine, and false dice, almost a beggar; but by your servant's mistaking me, the happiest man that ever love and beauty smiled on.

Aman. One thing more, sir. Are you married? [*Aside*] Now my fears.

Love. I was, but very young.

Aman. What was your wife?

Love. A foolish, loving thing that built castles in the air and thought it impossible for a man to forswear himself when he made love.

Aman. Was she not virtuous?

Love. Umph! Yes, faith, I believe she might; I was never jealous of her.

Aman. Did you never love her?

Love. Ah, most damnably at first, for she was within two women of my maidenhead.

Aman. What's become of her?

Love. Why, after I had been from her beyond sea about seven or eight years, like a very loving fool she died of the pip and civilly left me the world free to range in.

Aman. Why did you leave her?

Love. Because she grew stale, and I could not whore in quiet for her. Besides, she was always exclaiming against my extravagancies, particularly my gaming, which she so violently opposed that I fancied a pleasure in it which since I never found, for in one month I lost between eight and ten thousand pounds which I had just before called in to pay my debts. This misfortune made my creditors come so thick upon me that I was forced to mortgage the remaining part of my estate to purchase new pleasure, which I knew I could not do on this side the water amidst the clamors of insatiate duns and the more hateful noise of a complaining wife.

Aman. Don't you wish you had taken her counsel, though?

Love. Not I, faith, madam.

Aman. Why so?

Love. Because it is to no purpose. I am master of more philosophy than to be concerned at what I can't help. But now, madam, pray give me leave to inform myself as far in your condition.

Aman. In a word, sir, till you know me thoroughly, I must own myself a perfect riddle to you.

Love. Nay, nay, I know you are a woman, but in what circumstances, wife or widow?

Aman. A wife, sir, a true, a faithful, and a virtuous wife.

Love. Humph! Truly, madam, your story begins something like a riddle. A virtuous wife, say you? What, and was you never false to your husband?

Aman. I never was, by heaven! For him and only him I still love above the world.

Love. Good again! Pray, madam, don't your memory fail you sometimes? Because I fancy you don't remember what you do overnight.

Aman. I told you, sir, I should appear a riddle to you, but if my heart will give me leave, I'll now unloose your fettered apprehension. But I must first amaze you more. Pray, sir, satisfy me in one particular. It is this: What are your undissembled thoughts of virtue? Now, if you can, shake off your loose, unthinking part and summon all your force of manly reason to resolve me.

Love. Faith, madam, methinks this is a very odd question for a woman of your character. I must confess you have amazed me.

Aman. It ought not to amaze you. Why should you think I made a mock of virtue? But last night you allowed my understanding greater than is usual in our sex; if so, can you believe I have no farther sense of happiness than what this empty, dark, and barren world can yield me? No, I have yet a prospect of a sublimer bliss, an hope that carries me to the bright regions of eternal day.

Love. [*aside*]. Humph! I thought her last night's humor was too good to hold. I suppose by and by she will ask me to go to church with her.—Faith, madam, in my mind this discourse is a little out of the way. You told me I should be acquainted with your condition, and at present that's what I had rather be informed of.

Aman. Sir, you shall. But first this question must be answered: Your thoughts of virtue, sir? By all my hopes of bliss hereafter, your answering this pronounces half my good or evil fate forever. But on my knees I beg you, do not speak till you have weighed it well. Answer me with the same truth and sincerity as you would answer heaven at your latest hour.

Love. Your words confound me, madam. Some wondrous secret surely lies ripened in your breast and seems to struggle for its fatal birth. What is it I must answer you?

Aman. Give me your real thoughts of virtue, sir. Can you believe there ever was a woman truly mistress of it, or is it only notion?

Love. Let me consider, madam. [*Aside*] What can this mean? Why is she so earnest in her demands and begs me to be serious as if her life depended on my answer. I will resolve her, as I ought, as truth and reason and the strange occasion seem to press me.—[*To her*] Most of your sex confound the very name of virtue, for they would seem to live without desires, which could they do, that were not virtue but the defect of unperforming nature, and no praise to them. For who can boast a victory when they have no foe to conquer? Now she alone gives the fairest proofs of virtue whose conscience and whole force of reason can curb her warm desires when opportunity would raise them. That such a woman may be found, I dare believe.

Aman. May I believe that from your soul you speak this undissembled truth?

Love. Madam, you may. But still you rack me with amazement. Why am I asked so strange a question?

Aman. I'll give you ease immediately. Since, then, you have allowed a woman may be virtuous, how will you excuse the man who leaves the bosom of a wife so qualified, for the abandoned pleasures of deceitful prostitutes? Ruins her fortune! Condemns her counsel! Loathes her bed and leaves her to the lingering miseries of despair and love, while in return for all these wrongs, she, his poor, forsaken wife, meditates no revenge but what her piercing tears and secret vows to heaven for his conversion yield her—yet still loves on, is constant and unshaken to the last! Can you believe that such a man can live without the stings of conscience and yet be master of his senses? Conscience! Did you never feel the checks of it? Did it never, never tell you of your broken vows?

Love. That you should ask me this confounds my reason. And yet your words are uttered with such a powerful accent they have awaked my soul and strike my thoughts with horror and remorse.

[*Stands in a fixed posture.*

Aman. Then let me strike you nearer, deeper yet—but arm your mind with gentle pity first, or I am lost forever.

Love. I am all pity, all faith, expectation, and confused amazement. Be kind, be quick, and ease my wonder.

Aman. Look on me well. Revive your dead remembrance, and, oh, for pity's sake [*Kneels*] hate me not for loving long, faith-

fully; forgive this innocent attempt of a despairing passion, and I shall die in quiet.

Love. Ha! Speak on! [*Amazed.*

Aman. I would not be! The word's too weighty for my faltering tongue, and my soul sinks beneath the fatal burden. Oh! [*Falls on the ground.*

Love. Ha! She faints! Look, fair creature! Behold a heart that bleeds for your distress and fain would share the weight of your oppressing sorrows! Oh, thou hast raised a thought within me that shocks my soul.

Aman. It is done. [*Rising*] The conflict's past, and heaven bids me speak undaunted. Know, then, even all the boasted raptures of your last night's love you found in your Amanda's arms. I am your wife.

Love. Hah!

Aman. Forever blessed or miserable, as your next breath shall sentence me.

Love. My wife! Impossible! Is she not dead? How shall I believe thee?

Aman. How time and my afflictions may have altered me, I know not. But here's an indelible confirmation. [*Bares her arm*] These speaking characters, which in their cheerful bloom our early passions mutually recorded.

Love. Ha! It is here. It is no illusion, but my real name, which seems to upbraid me as a witness of my perjured love. Oh, I am confounded with my guilt and tremble to behold thee. Pray give me leave to think. [*Turns from her.*

Aman. I will. [*Kneels*] But you must look upon me. For only eyes can hear the language of the eyes, and mine have surely the tenderest tale of love to tell that ever misery at the dawn of rising hope could utter.

Love. I have wronged you. Oh, rise! Basely wronged you! and can I see your face?

Aman. One kind, one pitying look cancels those wrongs forever, and, oh, forgive my fond, presuming passion, for from my soul I pardon and forgive you all—all, all but this, the greatest, your unkind delay of love.

Love. Oh, seal my pardon with thy trembling lips, while with this tender grasp of fond reviving love I seize my bliss and stifle all thy wrongs forever. [*He embraces her.*

Aman. No more. I'll wash away their memory in tears of flowing joy.

Love. Oh, thou hast roused me from my deep lethargy of vice! For hitherto my soul has been enslaved to loose desires, to vain, deluding follies, and shadows of substantial bliss, but now I wake with joy to find my rapture real. Thus let me kneel and pay my thanks to her whose conquering virtue has at last subdued me. Here will I fix, thus prostrate sigh my shame, and wash my crimes in never-ceasing tears of penitence.

Aman. Oh, rise! This posture heaps new guilt on me. Now you over-pay me.

Love. Have I not used thee like a villain? For almost ten long years deprived thee of my love and ruined all thy fortune? But I will labor, dig, beg, or starve to give new proofs of my unfeigned affection.

Aman. Forbear this tenderness, lest I repent of having moved your soul so far—you shall not need to beg. Heaven has provided for us beyond its common care. It is now nearly two years since my uncle, Sir William Wealthy, sent you the news of my pretended death. Knowing the extravagance of your temper, he thought it fit you should believe no other of me, and about a month after he had sent you that advice, poor man, he died and left me in the full possession of two thousand pounds a year, which I now cannot offer as a gift because my duty and your lawful right makes you the undisputed master of it.

Love. How have I labored for my own undoing, while in despite of all my follies, kind heaven resolved my happiness.

Enter Servant to Amanda.

Serv. Madam, Sir William Wisewoud has sent your ladyship the writings you desired him and says he'll wait upon you immediately.

Aman. Now, sir, if you please to withdraw a while, you may inform yourself how fair a fortune you are master of.

Love. None, none that can outweigh a virtuous mind. While in my arms I thus can circle thee, I grasp more treasure than in a day the posting sun can travel over. Oh, why have I so long been blind to the perfections of thy mind and person? Not knowing thee a wife, I found thee charming beyond the wishes of luxurious love. Is it then a name, a word, shall rob thee of thy worth? Can fancy be a surer guide to happiness than reason? Oh, I have wandered like a benighted wretch and lost myself in life's unpleasing journey.

'Twas heedless fancy first that made me stray,
But reason now breaks forth and lights me on my way. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

The Scene changes to an entry.

Enter three or four Servants.

First Serv. Prithee, Tom, make haste below there. My lady has ordered dinner at half an hour after one precisely. Look out some of the red that came in last.

[*Two of the Servants haul* Snap *and* Amanda's Woman *out of the cellar.*

Second Serv. Come, sir, come out here and show your face.

Woman. Oh, I am undone—ruined!

Second Serv. Pray, sir, who are you, and what was your business, and how in the devil's name came you in here?

Snap. Why, truly, sir, the flesh led me to the cellar door, but I believe the devil pushed me in. That gentlewoman can inform you better.

Third Serv. Pray, Mrs. Anne, how came you two together in the cellar?

Woman. Why, he—he—pu—pu—pulled me in. [*Sobbing.*

Third Serv. But how the devil came he in?

Woman. He fe—fe—fe—fell in.

Second Serv. How came he into the house?

Woman. I do—do—don't know.

Second Serv. Ah, you are a crocodile. I thought that was the reason I could never get a good word from you. What, in a cellar, too! But come, sir, we will take care of you, however. Bring him along. We will first carry him before my lady and then toss him in a blanket.

Snap. Nay, but gentlemen, dear gentlemen! [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

The Scene changes to Amanda's *house.*

Enter Loveless, Amanda, Elder Worthy, Young Worthy, Narcissa, *and* Hillaria.

Elder Wor. This is indeed a joyful day; we must all congratulate your happiness.

Aman. Which while our lives permit us to enjoy, we must still reflect with gratitude on the generous author of it. Sir, we owe you more than words can pay you.

Love. Words are indeed too weak; therefore let my gratitude be dumb till it can speak in actions.

Young Wor. The success of the design I thought on sufficiently rewards me.

Hill. When I reflect upon Amanda's past afflictions, I could almost weep to think of her unexpected change of fortune.

Elder Wor. Methinks her fair example should persuade all constant wives never to repine at unrewarded virtue. Nay, even my brother being the first promoter of it has atoned for all the looseness of his character.

Love. I never can return his kindness.

Narc. In a short time, sir, I suppose you'll meet with an opportunity, if you can find a receipt to preserve love after his honeymoon's over.

Love. The receipt is easily found, madam. Love's a tender plant which can't live out of a warm bed. You must take care with undissembled kindness to keep him from the northern blast of jealousy.

Narc. But I have heard your experienced lovers make use of coldness, and that's more agreeable to my inclination.

Love. Coldness, madam, before marriage, like throwing a little water upon a clear fire, makes it burn the fiercer, but after marriage you must still take care to lay on fresh fuel.

Narc. Oh fie, sir! How many examples have we of men's hating their wives for being too fond of 'em?

Love. No wonder, madam. You may stifle a flame by heaping on too great a load.

Narc. Nay, sir, if there be no other way of destroying his passion, for me he may love till doomsday.

Elder Wor. Humph! Don't you smell powder, gentlemen? Sir Novelty is not far off.

Love. What, not our fellow collegian, I hope, that was expelled the university for beating the proctor?

Elder Wor. The same.

Love. Does that weed grow still?

Elder Wor. Ay, faith, and as rank as ever, as you shall see, for here he comes.

Enter Sir Novelty Fashion.

Sir Nov. Ladies, your humble servant. Dear Loveless, let me embrace thee. I am overjoyed at thy good fortune, stop my vitals. The whole town rings of it already. My Lady Tattletongue has tired a pair of horses in spreading the news about. Hearing, gentlemen, that you were all met upon an extraordinary good occasion, I could not resist this opportunity of joining my joy with yours, for you must know I am.—

Narc. Married, sir?

Sir Nov. To my liberty, madam. I am just parted from my mistress.

Narc. And pray, sir, how do you find yourself after it?

Sir Nov. The happiest man alive, madam. Pleasant, easy, gay, light, and free as air! Hah [*Capers*] I beg your ladyship's pardon, madam, but, upon my soul, I cannot confine my rapture.

Narc. Are you so indifferent, sir?

Sir Nov. Oh, madam, she's engaged already to a Temple Beau! I saw them in a coach together so fond! And bore it with as unmoved a countenance as Tom Worthy does a thundering jest in a comedy, when the whole house roars at it.

Young Wor. Pray, sir, what occasioned your separation?

Sir Nov. Why, this, sir: You must know she, being still possessed with a brace of implacable devils called revenge and jealousy, dogged me this morning to the chocolate house, where I was obliged to leave a

letter for a young, foolish girl that—You will excuse me, sir,—which I had no sooner delivered to the maid of the house, but, whip! she snatches it out of her hand, flew at her like a dragon, tore off her head clothes, flung down three or four sets of lemonade glasses, dashed my Lord Whiffle's chocolate in his face, cut him over the nose, and had like to have strangled me in my own steenkirk.

Love. Pray, sir, how did this end?

Sir Nov. Comically, stop my vitals, for in the cloud of powder that she had battered out of the beau's periwigs I stole away, after which I sent a friend to her with an offer which she readily accepted (three hundred pounds a year during life) provided she would renounce all claims to me and resign my person to my own disposal.

Elder Wor. Methinks, Sir Novelty, you were a little too extravagant in your settlement, considering how the price of women is fallen.

Sir Nov. Therefore I did it to be the first man should raise their price, for, the devil take me, but the women of the town now come down so low that my very footman, while he kept my place t'other day at the playhouse, carried a mask out of the side-box with him and, stop my vitals, the rogue is now taking physic for it.

Enter the Servants with Snap.

First Serv. Come, bring him along there.

Love. How now? Ha! Snap in hold. Pray, let's know the business. Release him, gentlemen.

First Serv. Why, an it please you, sir, this fellow was taken in the cellar with my lady's woman. She says he kept her in by force and was rude to her. She stands crying here without and begs her ladyship to do her justice.

Aman. Mr. Loveless, we are both the occasion of this misfortune, and for the poor girl's reputation-sake, something should be done.

Love. Snap, answer me directly, have you lain with this poor girl?

Snap. Why, truly, sir, imagining you were doing little less with my lady, I must confess, I did commit familiarity with her, or so, sir.

Love. Then you shall marry her, sir! No reply unless it be your promise.

Snap. Marry her! Oh, Lord, sir, after I have lain with her? Why, sir, how the devil can you think a man can have any stomach to his dinner after he has had three or four slices off of the spit?

Love. Well, sirrah, to renew your appetite, and because thou hast been my old acquaintance, I'll give thee an hundred pounds with her and thirty pounds a year during life to set you up in some honest employment.

Snap. Ah, sir, now I understand you. Heaven reward you! Well, sir, I partly find that the genteel scenes of our lives are pretty well over, and I thank heaven that I have so much grace left that I can repent when I have no more opportunities of being wicked. Come, spouse! [*She enters*] Here's my hand; the rest of my body shall be forthcoming. Ah, little did my master and I think last night that we were robbing our own orchards. [*Exeunt the Servants.*

Elder Wor. Brother, stand upon your guard. Here comes Sir William.

Enter Sir William Wisewoud.

Sir Will. Joy, joy to you all! Madam, I congratulate your good fortune. Well, my dear rogue, must not I give thee joy, too? Ha!

Young Wor. If you please, sir, but, I confess, I have more than I deserve already.

Sir Will. And art thou married?

Young Wor. Yes, sir, I am married.

Sir Will. Odso, I am glad on it. [*Aside to* Young Worthy.] I dare swear thou dost not grudge me the five thousand pounds.

Young Wor. Not I, really, sir. You have given me all my soul could wish for but the addition of a father's blessing.

[*Kneels with* Narcissa.

Sir Will. Humh! What dost thou mean? I am none of thy father.

Young Wor. This lady is your daughter, sir, I hope.

Sir Will. Prithee, get up! Prithee, get up! Thou art stark mad! True, I believe she may be my daughter. Well, and so, sir?

Young Wor. If she be not, I'm certain she's my wife, sir.

Sir Will. Humh! Mr. Worthy, pray, sir, do me the favor to help me understand your brother a little. Do you know anything of his being married?

Elder Wor. Then without any abuse, Sir William, he married your daughter this very morning, not an hour ago, sir.

Sir Will. Pray, sir, whose consent had you? Who advised you to it?

Young Wor. Our mutual love and your consent, sir, which these writings, entitling her to a thousand pounds a year, and this bond, whereby you have obliged yourself to pay me five thousand pounds upon our day of marriage, are sufficient proofs of.

Sir Will. He, he! I gave your brother such a bond, sir.

Young Wor. You did so, but the obligation is to me. Look there, sir.

Sir Will. Very good! This is my hand, I must confess, sir, and what then?

Young Wor. Why, then, I expect my five

thousand pounds, sir. Pray, sir, do you know my name?

Sir Will. I am not drunk, sir. I am sure it was Worthy, and Jack, or Tom, or Dick, or something.

Young Wor. No, sir, I'll show you. It is William. Look you there, sir. You should have taken more care of the lawyer, sir, that filled up the blank.

Elder Wor. So now his eyes are open.

Sir Will. And have you married my daughter against my consent and tricked me out of five thousand pounds, sir?

Hill. His brother, sir, has married me, too, with my consent, and I am not tricked out of five thousand pounds.

Sir Will. Insulting witch! Look you, sir, I never had a substantial cause to be angry in my life before, but now I have reason on my side, I will indulge my indignation most immoderately. I must confess, I have not patience to wait the slow redress of a tedious law-suit, therefore am resolved to right myself the nearest way. Draw, draw, sir, you must not enjoy my five thousand pounds, though I fling as much more after it in procuring a pardon for killing you. [*They hold him.*] Let me come at him; I'll murder him! I'll cut him! I'll tear him! I'll broil him and eat him! A rogue! A dog! A cursed dog! A cut-throat, murdering dog!

Elder Wor. Oh, fie, Sir William, how monstrous is this passion!

Sir Will. You have disarmed me, but I shall find a time to poison him.

Love. Think better on it, Sir William. Your daughter has married a gentleman, and one whose love entitles him to her person.

Sir Will. Ay, but the five thousand pounds, sir! Why, the very report of his having such a fortune will ruin him; I warrant you within this week he will have more duns at his chamber in a morning than a gaming lord after a good night at the groom porters or a poet upon the fourth day of his new play. I shall never be pleased with paying it against my own consent, sir.

Hill. Yet you would have had me done it, Sir William. But, however, I heartily wish you would as freely forgive Mr. Worthy as I do you, sir.

Sir Will. I must confess this girl's good nature makes me ashamed of what I have offered. But, Mr. Worthy, I did not expect such usage from a man of your character. I always took you for a gentleman.

Elder Wor. You shall find me no other, sir. Brother, a word with you.

Love. Sir William, I have some obligations to this gentleman and have so great a confidence in your daughter's merit and his love that I here promise to return you your five thousand pounds if, after the expiration of one year, you are then dissatisfied in his being your son-in-law.

Young Wor. But see, brother, he has forstalled your purpose.

Elder Wor. Mr. Loveless, you have been beforehand with me, but you must give me leave to offer Sir William my joint security for what you have promised him.

Love. With all my heart, sir. Dare you take our bonds, Sir William?

Young Wor. Hold gentlemen! I should blush to be obliged to that degree; therefore, Sir William, as the first proof of that respect and duty I owe a father, I here unasked return your bond and will henceforth expect nothing from you but as my conduct shall deserve it.

Aman. This is indeed a generous act; methinks it were pity it should go unrewarded.

Sir Will. Nay, now you vanquish me. After this I can't suspect your future conduct. There, sir. It is yours; I acknowledge the bond and wish you all the happiness of a bridal bed. Heaven's blessings on you both. Now rise, my boy, and let the world know it was I set you upon your legs again.

Young Wor. I'll study to deserve your bounty, sir.

Love. Now, Sir William, you have shown yourself a father. This prudent action has secured your daughter from the usual consequence of a stolen marriage, a parent's curse. Now she must be happy in her love while you have such a tender care on it.

Aman. This is indeed a happy meeting; we all of us have drawn our several prizes in the lottery of human life. Therefore I beg our joys may be united. Not one of us must part this day. The ladies I'll entreat my guests.

Love. The rest are mine and, I hope, will often be so.

Aman. It is yet too soon to dine; therefore, to divert us in the meantime, what think you of a little music, the subject perhaps not improper to this occasion?

Elder Wor. It will oblige us, madam; we are all lovers of it.

The scene draws and discovers Love *seated on a throne, attended with a* Chorus.

Fame. Hail! Hail! Victorious Love,
To whom all hearts below
With no less pleasure bow
Than to the thundering Jove
The happy souls above.

Chorus. Hail, *etc.*

Enter Reason.

Reason. Cease, cease, fond fools, your empty noise
And follow not such joys;
Love gives you but a short-lived bliss,
But I bestow immortal happiness.

Love. Rebellious Reason, talk no more;
Of all my slaves, I thee abhor;
But thou, alas, dost strive in vain
To free the lover from a pleasing chain;
In spite of Reason, Love shall live and reign.

Chorus. In spite, *etc.*

[*A martial symphony.*

Enter HONOR.

Honor. What wretch would follow Love's alarms
When Honor's trumpet sounds to arms?
Hark, how the warlike notes inspire
In every breast a glowing fire.

Love. Hark, how it swells with love and soft desire.

Honor. Behold, behold the married state
By thee too soon betrayed,
Repenting now too late.

Enter MARRIAGE, *with his yoke.*

Marriage. Oh, tell me, cruel God of Love,
Why didst thou my thoughts possess
With an eternal round of happiness,
And yet, alas! I lead a wretched life,
Doomed to this galling yoke—the emblem of a wife.

Love. Ungrateful wretch, how darest thou Love upbraid?
I gave thee raptures in the bridal bed.

Marriage. Long since, alas! the airy vision's fled,
And I with wandering flames my passion feed.
Oh, tell me, powerful god,
Where I shall find
My former peace of mind!

Love. Where first I promised thee a happy life,
There thou shalt find it in a virtuous wife.

Love and Fame. Go home, unhappy wretch, and mourn
For all thy guilty passion past;
There thou shalt those joys return
Which shall for ever, ever last.

[*End with the first chorus.*

Love. **It was generously designed, and all my life to come shall show how I approve the moral. Oh, Amanda, once more receive me to thy arms, and while I am there let all the world confess my happiness. By my example taught let every man whose fate has bound him to a married life beware of letting loose his wild desires, for if experience may be allowed to judge, I must proclaim the folly of a wandering passion. The greatest happiness we can hope on earth,**

And sure the nearest to the joys above,
Is the chaste rapture of a virtuous love.

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MISS CROSS, WHO SANG CUPID

Now, gallants, for the author: first, to you,
Kind city gentlemen, of the middle row,
He hopes you nothing to his charge can lay;
There's not one cuckold made in all this play;
Nay, you must own, if you'll believe your eyes,
He draws his pen against your enemies,
For, he declares to-day, he merely strives
To maul the beaux—because they maul your wives.
Now, sirs, to you, whose sole religion's drinking,
Whoring, roaring, without the pain of thinking,
He fears he's made a fault you'll ne'er forgive,
A crime beyond the hopes of a reprieve.
An honest rake forego the joys of life,
His whores and wine, to embrace a dull-cast wife!
Such out-of-fashion stuff! But then, again,
He's lewd for above four acts, gentlemen!
For, faith, he knew, when once he'd changed his fortune
And reformed his vice, 'twas time to drop the curtain.
Four acts for your coarse palates were designed,
But then the ladies' taste is more refined;
They, for Amanda's sake, will sure be kind.
Pray, let this figure once your pity move,
Can you resist the pleading God of Love?
In vain my prayers the other sex pursue
Unless your conquering smiles their stubborn hearts subdue.

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH

THE RELAPSE

Like Etherege, Wycherley and Congreve, Sir John Vanbrugh was a fine gentleman so closely akin to the gay world of club and park and mall that it genially dubbed him "Brother Van," praised him as "one of the three most honest-hearted and good men of the poetical members of the Kit-Cat Club" and applauded his pleasant wit and unaffected good humor. But unlike many of his gifted contemporaries, he was not content with the name of gentleman. He was in youth a soldier, gaining at last a captain's title as life's compensation for long confinement in French prisons. And he early chose the profession of architect in which he won high distinction through the same constructive skill that he sometimes exhibits in his dramas. Castle Howard and Blenheim Palace are monuments as conspicuous as *The Relapse* and *The Provoked Wife.*

Vanbrugh was by blood only half-Briton. His father, Giles, son of the Gilles Van Brugh who fled from Flanders to England to escape the Spanish persecution of Protestants, had bettered his lot both by marriage and by trade. His wife, a member of a distinguished English family, Elizabeth Carleton, granddaughter of Sir Dudley, who had won a peerage by his services to Charles I, linked him with the aristocracy and his occupation, that of sugar-baker at Chester, brought him large prosperity. The future dramatist, born in 1664, was the oldest surviving son of a family of nineteen children and inherited in 1689 one-seventh of his father's real estate. After training at the King's School in Chester, he seems to have gone early to France, doubtless to enter upon his chosen study of architecture. He crossed the Channel some years after to serve in an English regiment. Colley Cibber tells us that the young officer had a heart above his income. His protracted period of imprisonment in France first at Calais in 1690 and two years later in the Bastille on the suspicion of espionage doubtless increased that ready command of the language, which he turned to account in his many adaptations from the French. Captaincies in Lord Berkeley's Marine Regiment of Foot in 1696 and the Earl of Huntingdon's Regiment in 1702 seem to have led to no active service.

Now the versatile Vanbrugh turned from military to civil offices: to the busy post of the Comptroller of the Board of Works, to the sinecure of

Clarencieux Herald, and to his building commissions at Blenheim, Greenwich Hospital and elsewhere. He was now a busy man of affairs. Vanbrugh's life is linked with the names of two women—one his worst enemy, the other his best beloved. For twenty years his generous ideas as architect of Blenheim clashed with the pitiful meanness of one of the ducal beneficiaries of a grateful government. After the passing of the Duke of Marlborough from the scene in 1716, his widow, the formidable Sarah, was at open war with her builder. His encounter with the Duchess pointed the truth of Pope's words: "Who breaks with her, provokes revenge from hell." He was forced into chancery by his dreadful enemy, but finally "got his money in spite of the hussy's teeth." This struggle with the avarice and caprice of the great finds expression in the spluttering wrath of Van's letters, but not on his stage. The hatred of Sarah Jennings is offset by the affection of Harriet Yarborough. There is perhaps something of the stuff of comedy in more than seven years' service of this middle-aged Jacob for his Rachel. At least Lady Mary Pierrepont (afterward Wortley-Montague), in the insolence of her teens, laughs immoderately at the love of forty-five for thirty: "You know, Van's taste was always odd: his inclination to ruins has given him a fancy for Mistress Yarborough; he sighs and ogles so that it would do your heart good to see him." Vanbrugh did not sigh in vain, for the little drama had a happy ending.

Vanbrugh's decade of activity as dramatist begins with *The Relapse* (1696-1697), a supplement to another man's work—the frank protest of realism against the thoroughgoing reformation of the rakish Loveless in Colley Cibber's recent comedy, *Love's Last Shift.* From Vanbrugh's so-called "Short Vindication of *The Relapse* and *The Provoked Wife,*" which covers twenty large octavo pages in Dobrée's edition of the Plays, the reader learns that such an outcome did not accord with our man of the world's conception of fallen human nature—hence the advent of another Loveless more plausible if less praisable. But this was only a part of the purpose of this sequel, which in its author's words was "got, conceived and born in six weeks' space." It is not merely a continuation of the story of Amanda and her erring husband as the title, *The Relapse* plainly suggests, but it gives a new lease of life to Cibber's beau, "Sir Novelty Fashion," himself a revival of Etherege's "Sir Fopling Flutter." In the *Apology* Cibber tells the story of these additions: "Sir John Vanbrugh not only did me honor as an artist by writing his *Relapse* as a sequel or second part to *Love's Last Shift;* but as an actor, too, by preferring me to the chief character in his own play; which from Sir Novelty he had ennobled by the style of Baron of Foppington. This play (*The Relapse*), from its new and easy turn of wit, had great success and gave me as a comedian, a second flight of reputation along with it."

So important did the Foppington motive become in Vanbrugh's treatment that Jeremy Collier in his *View of the Stage,* 1698, objected to the very title

of the play, *The Relapse or Virtue in Danger,* as relating only to Loveless and Amanda who are characters of inferior consideration and suggested that *The Younger Brother or The Fortunate Cheat* had been a much more proper name because young Fashion is without competition the principal person in the comedy. Vanbrugh in his *Vindication* answers that "Foppington and all his circle are the inferior persons of the plays and what they do is more to divert the audience than to instruct them." Surely our chief entertainment is the "diversion" that these persons provide rather than the "instruction" conveyed in the heavy moralizings of the susceptible Loveless which accompany his relapse and in the sentimental soliloquies of the slighted Amanda which sacrifice rather than save the comedy. The author then anticipates an objection strongly felt by the modern reader, whether it be right to have two distinct designs in one play, and justifies the presence of these with the plea that both are entertaining. The excuse has little weight, if "distinct" implies independence. The world of Loveless and Amanda and that of Foppington touch only in two scenes (Act II, Sc. 1; Act V, Sc. 5); and in the second, the long finale of the drama, only one short sentence is spoken by either of Vanbrugh's alleged protagonists, Loveless' summary expression of affection for his own wife connoting the happy outcome of penitence and forgiveness. Thus, the persons of the second plot, since they are more conspicuous and more diverting than those of the first, "steal" our interest and applause.

Criticism has remarked that the entertainment in *The Relapse* is somewhat mixed, for the romantic and comic threads are as far asunder as the elements of verse—very free verse indeed—and prose in this drama, yet for this medley Vanbrugh might plead large Shaksperean precedent. Palmer, commenting upon the obvious lack of strict coherence, remarks that "the rise of English comedy was determined when Etherege, in his second play, discarded the pretences of verse and that the decline of English comedy was determined when Vanbrugh, in his first play, restored confusion." According to this critic, Vanbrugh also "insured the decay of the comedy of manners by importing passion into his love scenes and by thus bringing them into the orbit of morality." But Dobrée thinks that Vanbrugh furthered the decay of the art not merely because his plays embody "a luscious treatment of sex," as in the scene between Loveless and Berinthia (*The Relapse,* IV, iii), but because their "characters are not in the grip of destiny like those of Wycherley and Congreve—there is choice, things might happen differently."

Yet Vanbrugh does not fail in the vitality of his persons and in the vividness of his situations. Etherege's Sir Fopling Flutter, first in time of the stage fops of the Restoration period, may also be first in greatness; but Lord Foppington, the later incarnation of Flutter and Fashion, is no mere echo of their chime of foppery and folly. He is himself a leader of the prevailing party of coxcombs. Indeed Ward in his *Dramatic Literature* (III, 479) is inclined to pronounce him "the best fop ever brought on the stage, unsur-

passed and unsurpassable and admirable from first to last." Indeed from beginning to end there is an inevitability in his every phrase and posture. Were he ever other than he is, he would fail of richness of effect; with him at least things may not happen differently. What gusto he displays in the rôle for which art rather than nature has designed him! "'Tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality." Thus at the outset he babbles of his newly won lordship, as he faces the accessories of his splendor, shoemaker, tailor, hosier, barber. In the scene with Amanda there is the same ecstasy: "Madam, my life; my life is a perpetual stream of pleasure that glides through such a variety of entertainments, etc." He is never in the dark about himself. His accent is always authentic. "Strike me dumb" or "Stop my vitals" from his lips is equally applicable to some shock of mild surprise and to a sword-point between his ribs. Even after he has been bilked of his bride in the last act, he puts on a serene countenance, for a philosophical air is the most becoming thing in the world to the face of a person of quality.

Vanbrugh takes his own, wherever he finds it; but, as commentators have often noticed, he gives new life to the stock types of Elizabethean and Restoration comedy. The ingénue, Hoyden, may be a reminiscence of Congreve's Mistress Prue, and Sir Tunbelly Clumsey has his counterparts among country squires of earlier drama and later novel; but "what the girl wants by art, she has by nature," and the old Knight vaunts himself "drunk and sober, a justice of the peace and knows how to deal with strollers." The Nurse is no more or less garrulous than her prototype of the Capulet household; and if Dr. Bull, the Chaplain, seems to Mr. Collier "abused upon the stage," Vanbrugh could plead that "the business of comedy is to show people what they should do by representing them upon the stage, doing what they should not."

It has been the wont of critics to find in Vanbrugh a dramatist whose standards of comedy were constantly at odds with those of his own life, and who accepted the conventions of the Restoration stage without being of the Restoration world. He saw better things and persons and heartily approved of them, as he often assures us in his answer to Collier's diatribe; yet he followed what the preacher deemed worse things and never in Professor Ten Eyck Perry's happy phrase, "succeeded in his struggle to emerge from the comic underworld." Perhaps the struggle was not very intense. As a dramatist he laughs infectiously at "men congregating in absurdities," but he fails calamitously to reveal self-communion. He reaches his nadir in soliloquy. On his stage sensibility becomes sentimentalism. Hence Berinthia and Foppington are far more memorable than Amanda and Loveless.

Colley Cibber, who played the Foppington rôle, admired Vanbrugh's pen for "its spirit, ease and readiness in producing plays so fast upon the neck of one another." All his dramatic works save one fall within ten years. The success of *The Relapse* was followed by the inevitable failure of *Æsop*, for the journey of this adaptation of a French play by one Monsieur Bour-

sault was, as Vanbrugh admits, "up hill with a dead English weight at the tail of him." At the close of his preface, the translator changes his figure: "Though it swam in France, it might have sunk in England. Their country abounds in cork, ours in lead." Then followed a comedy begun by Vanbrugh in the Bastille and now acted in Lincoln Inn Field as *The Provoked Wife*. The figures of Sir John Brute, who is, says Nettleton, of "the beef-and-beer school, an alehouse brawler with a bully's cowardice"—and of those sprightly ladies, Lady Brute and Belinda, her niece—assured the drama's popularity. In deference to Collier, who quarreled with Sir John's assumption of the disguise of a parson's robe, Vanbrugh, recalling perhaps the comic escapade of a more famous Sir John, substituted a woman's dress. The drama was triumphant, but it called forth lively rebuke from the "Society for the Reformation of Manners" in its appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury, against Vanbrugh on account of "the most abominable obscene expressions which so frequently occur in his plays."

Then three Drury Lane dramas, *The Pilgrim* (1700), *The False Friend* (1701), *The Country House* (1703), preceded a venture in which Vanbrugh the builder cooperated with Vanbrugh the man of the theatre—the construction of The Queen Theatre or Italian Opera House in the Haymarket in 1705. The vaunted "dimensions of this noble pile," designed among other purposes, "for the suppression of vice" were responsible for the suppressing of the voice as well. So wretched were the acoustics that speeches of the actor "sounded like the gabbling of so many people in the lofty aisles of the theatre." All of Vanbrugh's later adaptations from the French were presented there: *The Confederacy,* from the *Bourgeois à la Mode of Dancour, The Cuckold in Conceit* from the *Cocu Imaginaire* of Molière, *Squire Trelooby* from his *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* and *The Mistake* from his *Dépit Amoureux*. "All these," says Colley Cibber, who, like many others, was there to see, but alas not to hear, "came to the ear in the same undistinguished utterance." These borrowings that bespeak Vanbrugh's easy mastery of French gained in his earlier years were his last plays save one—*A Journey to London,* which was published unfinished in 1728, two years after his death and completed by Cibber for presentation at Drury Lane.

If the Duchess of Marlborough erred, as she was prone to do against dignity and decency from sheer littleness, her architect and enemy, who became Sir John upon the Duke's introduction, offended often the decorum of art through his love of bigness. It was Vanbrugh's weakness to confuse the great and the grandiose. The coarseness of effect, which is noticeable in his plays and which is traced on no very good grounds to his Flemish origins, is visible in his "Brobdingnagian mansions." He strove for the stupendous. Immensity and Vanbrugh appear not only at Blenheim but at Floors, at Stowe, at Grimthorpe. One may also find without effort a parallel between the medley of elements in his palaces and the heterogeneity of his plots. Yet single parts and passages are often tremendously effective. "Van-

brugh," says Hazlitt, "does not lay the same deliberate train from the outset to the conclusion, so that the whole may hang together—but he works out scene after scene on the spur of the occasion." Through contrasts and antipathies he gains his ends—the clumsy and the flimsy, Sir Tunbelly and Lord Foppington. He has little perception of finer shades and feelings. Foppington is Gargantuan in his vainglory.

The briefest comment upon the stage history of *The Relapse* must begin with the oft-quoted tribute from the man whose own play provoked this sequel. Kindly Colley Cibber, who found in Vanbrugh's triumphant continuation of his double theme of the reunion of sundered man and wife and of the humors of novelty and fashion cause not for grudging but for gratulations, marks several reasons for the theatrical success of his friendly rival. He praises not only his "new and easy turn of wit and his conceptions full of life and humor," but the adornment of nature, "like the face of a fine woman with her locks loose about her." "There is something so catching to the ear, so easy to the memory in all he writ that it has been observed by all the actors of my time that the style of no author whatsoever gave their memory less trouble. Thus the play, however imperfect in its conduct, ran away with the hearts of its hearers." Cibber might have added that the interpretation of the drama by an excellent company with himself as Foppington, Doggett as Lory, Powell, unfortunately full of Nantz brandy at the *première,* as Worthy, Verbruggen as Loveless, Mrs. Rogers, "competent but prudish" as Amanda, Mrs. Verbruggen as Berinthia and Miss Cross, a very young girl, as Hoyden. The play held the stage for eighty years, when it was replaced for a year by Lee's adaptation, *A Man of Quality* (1776) and permanently by Sheridan's modernized and localized recasting, *A Trip to Scarborough* (1777) which professed "to draw some slender covering o'er that graceless wit, which was too bare before." Better to bare than to bury wit in such wise!

THE RELAPSE;

OR,

VIRTUE IN DANGER

FIRST PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MISS CROSS

Ladies, this play in too much haste was writ,
To be o'ercharged with either plot or wit;
'Twas got, conceived, and born in six weeks' space,
And wit, you know, 's as slow in growth as—grace.

Sure it can ne'er be ripened to your taste;
I doubt 'twill prove, our author bred too fast:
For mark 'em well, who with the Muses marry,
They rarely do conceive, but they miscarry.
'Tis the hard fate of those who are big with rhyme,
Still to be brought to bed before their time.
Of our late poets Nature few has made;
The greatest part are only so by trade.
Still want of something brings the scribbling fit;
For want of money some of 'em have writ,
And others do't, you see—for want of wit.
Honor, they fancy, summons 'em to write,
So out they lug in wresty Nature's spite,
As some of you spruce beaux do—when you fight.
Yet let the ebb of wit be ne'er so low,
Some glimpse of it a man may hope to show,
Upon a theme so ample as—a beau.
So, howsoe'er true courage may decay,
Perhaps there's not one smock-face here to-day,
But's bold as Cæsar—to attack a play,
Nay, what's yet more, with an undaunted face,
To do the thing with more heroic grace,
'Tis six to four y'attack the strongest place.
You are such Hotspurs in this kind of venture,
Where there's no breach, just there you needs must enter:
But be advised—
E'en give the hero and the critic o'er,
For Nature sent you on another score;—
She formed her beau, for nothing but her whore.

PROLOGUE ON THE THIRD DAY

SPOKEN BY MRS. VERBRUGGEN

Apologies for plays, experience shows,
Are things almost as useless as—the beaux.
Whate'er we say (like them) we neither move
Your friendship, pity, anger, nor your love.
'Tis interest turns the globe: let us but find
The way to please you, and you'll soon be kind:
But to expect, you'd for our sakes approve,
Is just as though you for their sakes should love;
And that, we do confess, we think a task,
Which (though they may impose) we never ought to ask.

This is an age, where all things we improve,
But, most of all, the art of making love.
In former days, women were only won
By merit, truth, and constant service done;
But lovers now are much more expert grown;
They seldom wait, t' approach by tedious form;
They're for dispatch, for taking you by storm:
Quick are their sieges, furious are their fires,
Fierce their attacks, and boundless their desires.
Before the play's half ended, I'll engage
To show you beaux come crowding on the stage,
Who with so little pains have always sped,
They'll undertake to look a lady dead.
How have I shook, and trembling stood with awe,
When here, behind the scenes, I've seen 'em draw
—A comb; that dead-doing weapon to the heart,
And turn each powdered hair into a dart!
When I have seen 'em sally on the stage,
Dressed to the war, and ready to engage,
I've mourned your destiny—yet more their fate,
To think, that after victories so great,
It should so often prove their hard mishap
To sneak into a lane—and get a clap.
But, hush! they're here already; I'll retire,
And leave 'em to you ladies to admire.
They'll show you twenty thousand airs and graces,
They'll entertain you with their soft grimaces,
Their snuff-box, awkward bows, and—ugly faces.
In short, they're after all so much your friends,
That lest the play should fail the author's ends,
They have resolv'd to make you some amends.
Between each act (performed by nicest rules)
They'll treat you—with an interlude of fools:
Of which, that you may have the deeper sense,
The entertainment's—at their own expense.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

Sir Novelty Fashion, *newly created* Lord Foppington.
Young Fashion, *his brother.*
Loveless, *husband to* Amanda.
Worthy, *a gentleman of the town.*
Sir Tunbelly Clumsey, *a country gentleman.*
Sir John Friendly, *his neighbor.*
Coupler, *a match-maker.*
Bull, *chaplain to* Sir Tunbelly.
Syringe, *a surgeon.*
Lory, *servant to* Young Fashion.
Shoemaker, Tailor, Foretop, etc.

WOMEN

Amanda, *wife to* Loveless.
Berinthia, *her cousin, a young widow.*
Miss Hoyden, *a great fortune, daughter to* Sir Tunbelly.
Nurse, *her gouvernante.*

ACT I

Scene I

A Room in Loveless's *Country House.*

Enter Loveless *reading.*

Love. How true is that philosophy, which says
Our heaven is seated in our minds!
Through all the roving pleasures of my youth,
(Where nights and days seemed all consumed in joy,
Where the false face of luxury
Displayed such charms,
As might have shaken the most holy hermit,
And made him totter at his altar,)
I never knew one moment's peace like this.
Here, in this little soft retreat,
My thoughts unbent from all the cares of life,
Content with fortune,
Eased from the grating duties of dependence,
From envy free, ambition under foot,
The raging flame of wild destructive lust
Reduced to a warm pleasing fire of lawful love,
My life glides on, and all is well within.

Enter Amanda. Loveless *meeting her kindly.*

How does the happy cause of my content,
My dear Amanda?
You find me musing on my happy state,
And full of grateful thoughts to heaven, and you.
Aman. Those grateful offerings heaven can't receive
With more delight than I do:
Would I could share with it as well
The dispensations of its bliss,
That I might search its choicest favors out,
And shower 'em on your head for ever!
Love. The largest boons that heaven thinks fit to grant,
To things it has decreed shall crawl on earth,
Are in the gift of women formed like you.
Perhaps, when time shall be no more,
When the aspiring soul shall take its flight,
And drop this ponderous lump of clay behind it,
It may have appetites we know not of,
And pleasures as refined as its desires——
But till that day of knowledge shall instruct me,
The utmost blessing that my thought can reach, [*Taking her in his arms.*
Is folded in my arms, and rooted in my heart.
Aman. There let it grow for ever!
Love. Well said, Amanda—let it be for ever——
Would heaven grant that——
Aman. 'Twere all the heaven I'd ask.
But we are clad in black mortality,
And the dark curtain of eternal night
At last must drop between us.
Love. It must:
That mournful separation we must see.
A bitter pill it is to all; but doubles its ungrateful taste,
When lovers are to swallow it.
Aman. Perhaps that pain may only be my lot,
You possibly may be exempted from it.
Men find out softer ways to quench their fires.
Love. Can you then doubt my constancy, Amanda?
You'll find 'tis built upon a steady basis——
The rock of reason now supports my love,
On which it stands so fixed,
The rudest hurricane of wild desire
Would, like the breath of a soft slumbering babe,
Pass by, and never shake it.
Aman. Yet still 'tis safer to avoid the storm;
The strongest vessels, if they put to sea,
May possibly be lost.

Would I could keep you here, in this calm port, for ever!
Forgive the weakness of a woman,
I am uneasy at your going to stay so long in town;
I know its false insinuating pleasures;
I know the force of its delusions;
I know the strength of its attacks;
I know the weak defence of nature;
I know you are a man—and I—a wife.

Love. You know then all that needs to give you rest,
For wife's the strongest claim that you can urge.
When you would plead your title to my heart,
On this you may depend. Therefore be calm,
Banish your fears, for they
Are traitors to your peace: beware of 'em,
They are insinuating busy things
That gossip to and fro,
And do a world of mischief where they come.
But you shall soon be mistress of 'em all;
I'll aid you with such arms for their destruction,
They never shall erect their heads again.

You know the business is indispensable, that obliges me to go for London; and you have no reason, that I know of, to believe I'm glad of the occasion. For my honest conscience is my witness.

I have found a due succession of such charms
In my retirement here with you,
I have never thrown one roving thought that way;
But since, against my will, I'm dragged once more
To that uneasy theater of noise,
I am resolved to make such use on't,
As shall convince you 'tis an old cast mistress,
Who has been so lavish of her favors,
She's now grown bankrupt of her charms,
And has not one allurement left to move me.

Aman. Her bow, I do believe, is grown so weak,
Her arrows (at this distance) cannot hurt you;
But in approaching 'em, you give 'em strength.
The dart that has not far to fly, will put
The best of armor to a dangerous trial.

Love. That trial past, and y'are at ease for ever;
When you have seen the helmet proved,
You'll apprehend no more for him that wears it.
Therefore to put a lasting period to your fears,
I am resolved, this once, to launch into temptation:
I'll give you an essay of all my virtues;
My former boon companions of the bottle
Shall fairly try what charms are left in wine:
I'll take my place amongst 'em,
They shall hem me in,
Sing praises to their god, and drink his glory:
Turn wild enthusiasts for his sake,
And beasts to do him honor:
Whilst I, a stubborn atheist,
Sullenly look on,
Without one reverend glass to his divinity.
That for my temperance,
Then for my constancy——

Aman. Ay, there take heed.

Love. Indeed the danger's small.

Aman. And yet my fears are great.

Love. Why are you so timorous?

Aman. Because you are so bold.

Love. My courage should disperse your apprehensions.

Aman. My apprehensions should alarm your courage.

Love. Fie, fie, Amanda! it is not kind thus to distrust me.

Aman. And yet my fears are founded on my love.

Love. Your love then is not founded as it ought;
For if you can believe 'tis possible
I should again relapse to my past follies,
I must appear to you a thing
Of such an undigested composition,
That but to think of me with inclination,
Would be a weakness in your taste,
Your virtue scarce could answer.

Aman. 'Twould be a weakness in my tongue,
My prudence could not answer,
If I should press you farther with my fears;
I'll therefore trouble you no longer with 'em.

Love. Nor shall they trouble you much longer.
A little time shall show you they were groundless:
This winter shall be the fiery trial of my virtue;
Which, when it once has passed,
You'll be convinced 'twas of no false allay,
There all your cares will end.

Aman. Pray heaven they may.

[*Exeunt, hand in hand.*

SCENE II

Whitehall.

Enter YOUNG FASHION, LORY, *and* WATERMAN.

Fash. Come, pay the waterman, and take the portmantle.

Lory. Faith, sir, I think the waterman had as good take the portmantle, and pay himself.

Fash. Why, sure there's something left in't!

Lory. But a solitary old waistcoat, upon honor, sir.

Fash. Why, what's become of the blue coat, sirrah?

Lory. Sir, 'twas eaten at Gravesend; the reckoning came to thirty shillings, and your privy purse was worth but two half-crowns.

Fash. 'Tis very well.

Waterman. Pray, master, will you please to dispatch me?

Fash. Ay, here, a—canst thou change me a guinea?

Lory [*aside*]. Good!

Waterman. Change a guinea, master! Ha! ha! your honor's pleased to compliment.

Fash. Egad, I don't know how I shall pay thee then, for I have nothing but gold about me.

Lory [*aside*]. Hum, hum!

Fash. What dost thou expect, friend?

Waterman. Why, master, so far against wind and tide is richly worth half a piece.

Fash. Why, faith, I think thou art a good conscionable fellow. Egad, I begin to have so good an opinion of thy honesty, I care not if I leave my portmantle with thee, till I send thee thy money.

Waterman. Ha! God bless your honor; I should be as willing to trust you, master, but that you are, as a man may say, a stranger to me, and these are nimble times; there are a great many sharpers stirring.—[*Taking up the portmantle*] Well, master, when your worship sends the money, your portmantle shall be forthcoming; my name's Tug; my wife keeps a brandy-shop in Drab-Alley, at Wapping.

Fash. Very well; I'll send for't to-morrow.

[*Exit* Waterman.

Lory. So.—Now, sir, I hope you'll own yourself a happy man, you have outlived all your cares.

Fash. How so, sir?

Lory. Why, you have nothing left to take care of.

Fash. Yes, sirrah, I have myself and you to take care of still.

Lory. Sir, if you could but prevail with somebody else to do that for you, I fancy we might both fare the better for't.

Fash. Why, if thou canst tell me where to apply myself, I have at present so little money and so much humility about me, I don't know but I may follow a fool's advice.

Lory. Why then, sir, your fool advises you to lay aside all animosity, and apply to Sir Novelty, your elder brother.

Fash. Damn my elder brother!

Lory. With all my heart; but get him to redeem your annuity, however.

Fash. My annuity! 'Sdeath, he's such a dog, he would not give his powder-puff to redeem my soul.

Lory. Look you, sir, you must wheedle him, or you must starve.

Fash. Look you, sir, I will neither wheedle him, nor starve.

Lory. Why, what will you do then?

Fash. I'll go into the army.

Lory. You can't take the oaths; you are a Jacobite.

Fash. Thou may'st as well say I can't take orders because I'm an atheist.

Lory. Sir, I ask your pardon; I find I did not know the strength of your conscience so well as I did the weakness of your purse.

Fash. Methinks, sir, a person of your experience should have known that the strength of the conscience proceeds from the weakness of the purse.

Lory. Sir, I am very glad to find you have a conscience able to take care of us, let it proceed from what it will; but I desire you'll please to consider, that the army alone will be but a scanty maintenance for a person of your generosity (at least as rents now are paid). I shall see you stand in damnable need of some auxiliary guineas for your *menus plaisirs;* I will therefore turn fool once more for your service, and advise you to go directly to your brother.

Fash. Art thou then so impregnable a blockhead, to believe he'll help me with a farthing?

Lory. Not if you treat him *de haut en bas,* as you use to do.

Fash. Why, how wouldst have me treat him?

Lory. Like a trout—tickle him.

Fash. I can't flatter.

Lory. Can you starve?

Fash. Yes.

Lory. I can't.—Good-by t'ye, sir——

[*Going.*

Fash. Stay; thou wilt distract me! What wouldst thou have me say to him?

Lory. Say nothing to him, apply yourself to his favorites, speak to his periwig, his cravat, his feather, his snuff-box, and when you are well with them—desire him to lend you a thousand pounds. I'll engage you'll prosper.

Fash. 'Sdeath and furies! why was that coxcomb thrust into the world before me? O Fortune! Fortune!—thou art a bitch, by Gad. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

A Room in Lord Foppington's *House.*

Enter Lord Foppington *in his nightgown.*

Lord Fop. Page!

Enter Page.

Page. Sir!

Lord Fop. Sir!—Pray, sir, do me the favor

to teach your tongue the title the king has thought fit to honor me with.

Page. I ask your lordship's pardon, my lord.

Lord Fop. O, you can pronounce the word then? I thought it would have choked you.—D'ye hear?

Page. My lord!

Lord Fop. Call La Verole: I would dress.—[*Exit Page.*]—Well, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality, strike me dumb!—My Lord.—Your lordship! My lord Foppington!—Ah! *c'est quelque chose de beau, que le diable m'emporte!*—Why, the ladies were ready to puke at me whilst I had nothing but Sir Navelty to recommend me to 'em.—Sure, whilst I was but a knight, I was a very nauseous fellow.—Well, 'tis ten thousand pawnd well given, stap my vitals!—

Enter La Verole.

La Ver. Me lord, de shoemaker, de tailor, de hosier, de sempstress, de barber, be all ready, if your lordship please to be dress.

Lord Fop. 'Tis well, admit 'em.

La Ver. Hey, *messieurs, entrez.*

Enter Tailor, Shoemaker, Mendlegs, Foretop, *and* Mrs. Calico.

Lord Fop. So, gentlemen, I hope you have all taken pains to show yourselves masters in your professions.

Tailor. I think I may presume to say, sir——

La Ver. My lord—you clawn, you!

Tailor. Why, is he made a lord?—My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon, my lord; I hope, my lord, your lordship will please to own I have brought your lordship as accomplished a suit of clothes as ever peer of England trod the stage in, my lord. Will your lordship please to try 'em now?

Lord Fop. Ay; but let my people dispose the glasses so that I may see myself before and behind, for I love to see myself all raund.

Whilst he puts on his clothes, enter Young Fashion *and* Lory.

Fash. Heyday, what the devil have we here? Sure my gentleman's grown a favorite at court, he has got so many people at his levee.

Lory. Sir, these people come in order to make him a favorite at court; they are to establish him with the ladies.

Fash. Good God! to what an ebb of taste are women fallen, that it should be in the power of a laced coat to recommend a gallant to 'em!

Lory. Sir, tailors and periwig-makers are now become the bawds of the nation; 'tis they debauch all the women.

Fash. Thou sayest true; for there's that fop now has not by nature wherewithal to move a cook-maid, and by that time these fellows have done with him, egad he shall melt down a countess!—But now for my reception; I'll engage it shall be as cold a one as a courtier's to his friend, who comes to put him in mind of his promise.

Lord Fop. [*to his Tailor*]. Death and eternal tartures! Sir, I say the packet's too high by a foot.

Tailor. My lord, if it had been an inch lower, it would not have held your lordship's pocket-handkerchief.

Lord Fop. Rat my pocket-handkerchief! have not I a page to carry it? You may make him a packet up to his chin a purpose for it; but I will not have mine come so near my face.

Tailor. 'Tis not for me to dispute your lordship's fancy.

Fash. [*to* Lory]. His lordship! Lory, did you observe that?

Lory. Yes, sir; I always thought 'twould end there. Now, I hope, you'll have a little more respect for him.

Fash. Respect!—Damn him for a coxcomb! now has he ruined his estate to buy a title, that he may be a fool of the first rate;—but let's accost him.—[*To* Lord Foppington] Brother, I'm your humble servant.

Lord Fop. O Lard, Tam! I did not expect you in England.—Brother, I am glad to see you.—[*Turning to his Tailor*] Look you, sir; I shall never be reconciled to this nauseous packet; therefore pray get me another suit with all manner of expedition, for this is my eternal aversion.—Mrs. Calico, are not you of my mind?

Mrs. Cal. O, directly, my lord! it can never be too low.

Lord Fop. You are pasitively in the right on't, for the packet becomes no part of the body but the knee. [*Exit Tailor.*

Mrs. Cal. I hope your lordship is pleased with your steenkirk.

Lord Fop. In love with it, stap my vitals!—Bring your bill, you shall be paid tomarrow.

Mrs. Cal. I humbly thank your honor. [*Exit.*

Lord Fop. Hark thee, shoemaker! these shoes an't ugly, but they don't fit me.

Shoe. My lord, my thinks they fit you very well.

Lord Fop. They hurt me just below the instep.

Shoe. [*feeling his foot*]. My lord, they don't hurt you there.

Lord Fop. I tell thee, they pinch me execrably.

Shoe. My lord, if they pinch you, I'll be bound to be hanged, that's all.

Lord Fop. Why, wilt thou undertake to persuade me I cannot feel?

Shoe. Your lordship may please to feel what you think fit; but that shoe does not hurt you; I think I understand my trade.

Lord Fop. Now by all that's great and powerful, thou art an incomprehensible coxcomb! but thou makest good shoes and so I'll bear with thee.

Shoe. My lord, I have worked for half the people of quality in town these twenty years; and 'twere very hard I should not know when a shoe hurts, and when it don't.

Lord Fop. Well, prithee be gone about thy business. [*Exit Shoemaker.*

[*To the Hosier*] Mr. Mendlegs, a word with you: the calves of these stockings are thickened a little too much. They make my legs look like a chairman's.

Mend. My lord, my thinks they look mighty well.

Lord Fop. Ay, but you are not so good a judge of these things as I am, I have studied 'em all my life; therefore pray let the next be the thickness of a crawn-piece less.—[*Aside*] If the town takes notice my legs are fallen away, 'twill be attributed to the violence of some new intrigue.—[*Exit* Mendlegs] [*To the Periwig-maker*] Come, Mr. Foretop, let me see what you have done, and then the fatigue of the marning will be over.

Fore. My lord, I have done what I defy any prince in Europe to outdo; I have made you a periwig so long, and so full of hair, it will serve you for hat and cloak in all weathers.

Lord Fop. Then thou hast made me thy friend to eternity. Come, comb it out.

Fash. [*aside to* Lory]. Well, Lory, what dost think on't? A very friendly reception from a brother after three years' absence!

Lory. Why, sir, it's your own fault; we seldom care for those that don't love what we love: if you would creep into his heart, you must enter into his pleasures.—Here have you stood ever since you came in, and have not commended any one thing that belongs to him.

Fash. Nor never shall, whilst they belong to a coxcomb.

Lory. Then, sir, you must be content to pick a hungry bone.

Fash. No, sir, I'll crack it, and get to the marrow before I have done.

Lord Fop. Gad's curse, Mr. Foretop! you don't intend to put this upon me for a full periwig?

Fore. Not a full one, my lord! I don't know what your lordship may please to call a full one, but I have crammed twenty ounces of hair into it.

Lord Fop. What it may be by weight, sir, I shall not dispute; but by tale, there are not nine hairs of a side.

Fore. O lord! O lord! O lord! Why, as Gad shall judge me, your honor's side-face is reduced to the tip of your nose!

Lord Fop. My side-face may be in eclipse for aught I know; but I'm sure my full-face is like the full-moon.

Fore. Heavens bless my eye-sight—[*Rubbing his eyes*] Sure I look through the wrong end of the perspective; for by my faith, an't please your honor, the broadest place I see in your face does not seem to me to be two inches diameter.

Lord Fop. If it did, it would be just two inches too broad; for a periwig to a man should be like a mask to a woman, nothing should be seen but his eyes.

Fore. My lord, I have done; if you please to have more hair in your wig, I'll put it in.

Lord Fop. Pasitively, yes.

Fore. Shall I take it back now, my lord?

Lord Fop. No: I'll wear it to-day, though it show such a manstrous pair of cheeks, stap my vitals, I shall be taken for a trumpeter. [*Exit* Foretop.

Fash. Now your people of business are gone, brother, I hope I may obtain a quarter of an hour's audience of you.

Lord Fop. Faith, Tam, I must beg you'll excuse me at this time, for I must away to the House of Lards immediately; my lady Teaser's case is to come on to-day, and I would not be absent for the salvation of mankind.—Hey, page!

Enter Page.

Is the coach at the door?

Page. Yes, my lord.

Lord Fop. You'll excuse me, brother.

[*Going.*

Fash. Shall you be back at dinner?

Lord Fop. As Gad shall jidge me, I can't tell; for 'tis passible I may dine with some of aur House at Lacket's.

Fash. Shall I meet you there? For I must needs talk with you.

Lord Fop. That I'm afraid mayn't be so praper; far the lards I commonly eat with, are people of a nice conversation; and you know, Tam, your education has been a little at large: but, if you'll stay here you'll find a family dinner.—[*To Page*] Hey, fellow! What is there for dinner? There's beef: I suppose my brother will eat beef.—Dear Tam, I'm glad to see thee in England, stap my vitals! [*Exit with* La Verole *and Page.*

Fash. Hell and furies! is this to be borne?

Lory. Faith, sir, I could almost have given him a knock o' th' pate myself.

Fash. 'Tis enough; I will now show thee the excess of my passion by being very calm. Come, Lory, lay your loggerhead to mine, and in cool blood let us contrive his destruction.

Lory. Here comes a head, sir, would con-

trive it better than us both, if he would but join in the confederacy.

Enter Coupler.

Fash. By this light, old Coupler alive still!—Why, how now, match-maker, art thou here to plague the world with matrimony? You old bawd, how have you the impudence to be hobbling out of your grave twenty years after you are rotten?

Coup. When you begin to rot, sirrah, you'll go off like a pippin; one winter will send you to the devil. What mischief brings you home again? Ha! you young lascivious rogue, you. Let me put my hand in your bosom, sirrah.

Fash. Stand off, old Sodom!

Coup. Nay, prithee now, don't be so coy.

Fash. Keep your hands to yourself, you old dog you, or I'll wring your nose off.

Coup. Hast thou then been a year in Italy, and brought home a fool at last? By my conscience, the young fellows of this age profit no more by their going abroad than they do by their going to church. Sirrah, sirrah, if you are not hanged before you come to my years, you'll know a cock from a hen. But, come, I'm still a friend to thy person, though I have a contempt of thy understanding; and therefore I would willingly know thy condition, that I may see whether thou stand'st in need of my assistance: for widows swarm, my boy, the town's infected with 'em.

Fash. I stand in need of anybody's assistance, that will help me to cut my elder brother's throat, without the risk of being hanged for him.

Coup. Egad, sirrah, I could help thee to do him almost as good a turn, without the danger of being burned in the hand for't.

Fash. Sayest thou so, old Satan? Show me but that, and my soul is thine.

Coup. Pox o' thy soul! give me thy warm body, sirrah; I shall have a substantial title to't when I tell thee my project.

Fash. Out with it then, dear dad, and take possession as soon as thou wilt.

Coup. Sayest thou so, my Hephestion? Why, then thus lies the scene.—But hold; who's that? if we are heard we are undone.

Fash. What, have you forgot Lory?

Coup. Who? Trusty Lory, is it thee?

Lory. At your service, sir.

Coup. Give me thy hand, old boy. Egad, I did not know thee again; but I remember thy honesty, though I did not thy face; I think thou hadst like to have been hanged once or twice for thy master.

Lory. Sir, I was very near once having that honor.

Coup. Well, live and hope; don't be discouraged; eat with him, and drink with him, and do what he bids thee, and it may be thy reward at last, as well as another's.—[*To* Young Fashion] Well, sir, you must know I have done you the kindness to make up a match for your brother.

Fash. I am very much beholding to you, truly.

Coup. You may be, sirrah, before the wedding-day yet. The lady is a great heiress; fifteen hundred pound a year, and a great bag of money; the match is concluded, the writings are drawn, and the pipkin's to be cracked in a fortnight. Now you must know, stripling (with respect to your mother), your brother's the son of a whore.

Fash. Good!

Coup. He has given me a bond of a thousand pounds for helping him to this fortune, and has promised me as much more in ready money upon the day of marriage, which, I understand by a friend, he ne'er designs to pay me. If therefore you will be a generous young dog, and secure me five thousand pounds, I'll be a covetous old rogue, and help you to the lady.

Fash. Egad, if thou canst bring this about, I'll have thy statue cast in brass. But don't you dote, you old pander you, when you talk at this rate?

Coup. That your youthful parts shall judge of. This plump partridge, that I tell you of, lives in the country, fifty miles off, with her honored parents, in a lonely old house which nobody comes near; she never goes abroad, nor sees company at home. To prevent all misfortunes, she has her breeding within doors; the parson of the parish teaches her to play upon the bass-viol, the clerk to sing, her nurse to dress, and her father to dance. In short, nobody can give you admittance there but I; nor can I do it any other way than by making you pass for your brother.

Fash. And how the devil wilt thou do that?

Coup. Without the devil's aid, I warrant thee. Thy brother's face not one of the family ever saw, the whole business has been managed by me, and all the letters go through my hands. The last that was writ to Sir Tunbelly Clumsey (for that's the old gentleman's name), was to tell him, his lordship would be down in a fortnight to consummate. Now, you shall go away immediately, pretend you writ that letter only to have the romantic pleasure of surprising your mistress; fall desperately in love, as soon as you see her; make that your plea for marrying her immediately, and, when the fatigue of the wedding-night's over, you shall send me a swinging purse of gold, you dog you.

Fash. Egad, old dad, I'll put my hand in thy bosom now.

Coup. Ah, you young hot lusty thief, let

me muzzle you!—[*Kissing*] Sirrah, let me muzzle you.

Fash. [*aside*]. Psha, the old lecher!

Coup. Well; I'll warrant thou hast not a farthing of money in thy pocket now; no, one may see it in thy face.

Fash. Not a souse, by Jupiter!

Coup. Must I advance then?—Well, sirrah, be at my lodgings in half an hour, and I'll see what may be done; we'll sign, and seal, and eat a pullet, and when I have given thee some farther instructions, thou shalt hoist sail and be gone.—[*Kissing*] T'other buss, and so adieu.

Fash. Um! psha!

Coup. Ah, you young warm dog you, what a delicious night will the bride have on't!

[*Exit.*

Fash. So, Lory; Providence, thou seest at last, takes care of men of merit: we are in a fair way to be great people.

Lory. Ay, sir, if the devil don't step between the cup and the lip, as he uses to do.

Fash. Why, faith, he has played me many a damned trick to spoil my fortune, and egad I'm almost afraid he's at work about it again now; but if I should tell thee how, thou'dst wonder at me.

Lory. Indeed, sir, I should not.

Fash. How dost know?

Lory. Because, sir, I have wondered at you so often, I can wonder at you no more.

Fash. No! what wouldst thou say if a qualm of conscience should spoil my design?

Lory. I would eat my words, and wonder more than ever.

Fash. Why, faith, Lory, though I am a young rake-hell, and have played many a roguish trick, this is so full-grown a cheat, I find I must take pains to come up to't, I have scruples——

Lory. They are strong symptoms of death; if you find they increase, pray, sir, make your will.

Fash. No, my conscience shan't starve me neither. But thus far I will hearken to it; before I execute this project, I'll try my brother to the bottom, I'll speak to him with the temper of a philosopher; my reasons (though they press him home) shall yet be clothed with so much modesty, not one of all the truths they urge shall be so naked to offend his sight. If he has yet so much humanity about him as to assist me (though with a moderate aid), I'll drop my project at his feet, and show him I can do for him much more than what I ask he'd do for me. This one conclusive trial of him I resolve to make——

Succeed or no, still victory's my lot;
If I subdue his heart, 'tis well; if not,
I shall subdue my conscience to my plot.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

A Room in Loveless's *Town House.*

Enter Loveless *and* Amanda.

Love. How do you like these lodgings, my dear? For my part, I am so well pleased with 'em, I shall hardly remove whilst we stay in town, if you are satisfied.

Aman. I am satisfied with everything that pleases you; else I had not come to town at all.

Love. Oh! a little of the noise and bustle of the world sweetens the pleasures of retreat. We shall find the charms of our retirement doubled, when we return to it.

Aman. That pleasing prospect will be my chiefest entertainment, whilst (much against my will) I am obliged to stand surrounded with these empty pleasures, which 'tis so much the fashion to be fond of.

Love. I own most of them are indeed but empty; nay, so empty, that one would wonder by what magic power they act, when they induce us to be vicious for their sakes. Yet some there are we may speak kindlier of. There are delights (of which a private life is destitute) which may divert an honest man, and be a harmless entertainment to a virtuous woman. The conversation of the town is one; and truly (with some small allowances), the plays, I think, may be esteemed another.

Aman. The plays, I must confess, have some small charms; and would have more, would they restrain that loose, obscene encouragement to vice, which shocks, if not the virtue of some women, at least the modesty of all.

Love. But till that reformation can be made, I would not leave the wholesome corn for some intruding tares that grow amongst it. Doubtless the moral of a well-wrought scene is of prevailing force.—Last night there happened one that moved me strangely.

Aman. Pray, what was that?

Love. Why 'twas about—but 'tis not worth repeating.

Aman. Yes, pray let me know it.

Love. No; I think 'tis as well let alone.

Aman. Nay, now you make me have a mind to know.

Love. 'Twas a foolish thing. You'd perhaps grow jealous should I tell it you, though without cause, heaven knows.

Aman. I shall begin to think I have cause, if you persist in making it a secret.

Love. I'll then convince you you have none, by making it no longer so. Know then, I happened in the play to find my very character, only with the addition of a relapse; which struck me so, I put a sudden

stop to a most harmless entertainment, which till then diverted me between the acts. 'Twas to admire the workmanship of nature, in the face of a young lady that sat some distance from me, she was so exquisitely handsome!—

Aman. So exquisitely handsome!

Love. Why do you repeat my words, my dear?

Aman. Because you seemed to speak 'em with such pleasure, I thought I might oblige you with their echo.

Love. Then you are alarmed, Amanda?

Aman. It is my duty to be so, when you are in danger.

Love. You are too quick in apprehending for me; all will be well when you have heard me out. I do confess I gazed upon her; nay, eagerly I gazed upon her.

Aman. Eagerly! that's with desire.

Love. No, I desired her not: I viewed her with a world of admiration, but not one glance of love.

Aman. Take heed of trusting to such nice distinctions.

Love. I did take heed; for observing in the play that he who seemed to represent me there was, by an accident like this, unwarily surprised into a net, in which he lay a poor entangled slave, and brought a train of mischiefs on his head, I snatched my eyes away; they pleaded hard for leave to look again, but I grew absolute, and they obeyed.

Aman. Were they the only things that were inquisitive? Had I been in your place, my tongue, I fancy, had been curious, too; I should have asked her name, and where she lived (yet still without design).—Who was she, pray?

Love. Indeed I cannot tell.

Aman. You will not tell.

Love. By all that's sacred then, I did not ask.

Aman. Nor do you know what company was with her?

Love. I do not.

Aman. Then I am calm again.

Love. Why were you disturbed?

Aman. Had I then no cause?

Love. None, certainly.

Aman. I thought I had.

Love. But you thought wrong, Amanda: for turn the case, and let it be your story; should you come home, and tell me you had seen a handsome man, should I grow jealous because you had eyes?

Aman. But should I tell you he were exquisitely so; and I had gazed on him with admiration; that I had looked with eager eyes upon him; should you not think 'twere possible I might go one step farther, and inquire his name?

Love. [*aside*]. She has reason on her side: I have talked too much; but I must turn it off another way.—[*Aloud*] Will you then make no difference, Amanda, between the language of our sex and yours? There is a modesty restrains your tongues, which makes you speak by halves when you commend; but roving flattery gives a loose to ours, which makes us still speak double what we think. You should not, therefore, in so strict a sense, take what I said to her advantage.

Aman. Those flights of flattery, sir, are to our faces only: when women once are out of hearing, you are as modest in your commendations as we are. But I shan't put you to the trouble of farther excuses, if you please this business shall rest here. Only give me leave to wish, both for your peace and mine, that you may never meet this miracle of beauty more.

Love. I am content.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, there's a young lady at the door in a chair, desires to know whether your ladyship sees company. I think her name is Berinthia.

Aman. O dear! 'tis a relation I have not seen these five years. Pray her to walk in. —[*Exit Servant*] Here's another beauty for you. She was young when I saw her last; but I hear she's grown extremely handsome.

Love. Don't you be jealous now; for I shall gaze upon her, too.

Enter Berinthia.

[*Aside*]—Ha! by Heavens the very woman!

Ber. [*saluting* Amanda]. Dear Amanda, I did not expect to meet with you in town.

Aman. Sweet cousin, I'm overjoyed to see you.—[*To* Loveless] Mr. Loveless, here's a relation and a friend of mine, I desire you'll be better acquainted with.

Love. [*saluting* Berinthia]. If my wife never desires a harder thing, madam, her request will be easily granted.

Ber. I think, madam, I ought to wish you joy.

Aman. Joy! Upon what?

Ber. Upon your marriage: you were a widow when I saw you last.

Love. You ought rather, madam, to wish me joy upon that, since I am the only gainer.

Ber. If she has got so good a husband as the world reports, she has gained enough to expect the compliments of her friends upon it.

Love. If the world is so favorable to me, to allow I deserve that title, I hope 'tis so just to my wife to own I derive it from her.

Ber. Sir, it is so just to you both, to own you are (and deserve to be) the happiest pair that live in it.

Love. I'm afraid we shall lose that character, madam, whenever you happen to change your condition.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lord Foppington presents his humble service to you, and desires to know how you do. He but just now heard you were in town. He's at the next door; and if it be not inconvenient, he'll come and wait upon you.

Love. Lord Foppington!—I know him not.

Ber. Not his dignity, perhaps, but you do his person. 'Tis Sir Novelty; he has bought a barony, in order to marry a great fortune. His patent has not been passed eight-and-forty hours, and he has already sent how-do-ye's to all the town, to make 'em acquainted with his title.

Love. Give my service to his lordship, and let him know I am proud of the honor he intends me.—[*Exit Servant*] Sure this addition of quality must have so improved his coxcomb, he can't but be very good company for a quarter of an hour.

Aman. Now it moves my pity more than my mirth, to see a man whom nature has made no fool, be so very industrious to pass for an ass.

Love. No, there you are wrong, Amanda; you should never bestow your pity upon those who take pains for your contempt. Pity those whom nature abuses, but never those who abuse nature.

Ber. Besides, the town would be robbed of one of its chief diversions, if it should become a crime to laugh at a fool.

Aman. I could never yet perceive the town inclined to part with any of its diversions, for the sake of their being crimes; but I have seen it very fond of some I think had little else to recommend 'em.

Ber. I doubt, Amanda, you are grown its enemy, you speak with so much warmth against it.

Aman. I must confess I am not much its friend.

Ber. Then give me leave to make you mine, by not engaging in its quarrel.

Aman. You have many stronger claims than that, Berinthia, whenever you think fit to plead your title.

Love. You have done well to engage a second, my dear; for here comes one will be apt to call you to an account for your country principles.

Enter Lord Foppington.

Lord Fop. [*to* Loveless]. Sir, I am your most humble servant.

Love. I wish you joy, my lord.

Lord Fop. O Lard, sir!—Madam, your ladyship's welcome to tawn.

Aman. I wish your lordship joy.

Lord Fop. O Heavens, madam——

Love. My lord, this young lady is a relation of my wife's.

Lord Fop. [*saluting* Berinthia]. The beautifullest race of people upon earth, rat me! Dear Loveless, I'm overjoyed to see you have brought your family to tawn again; I am, stap my vitals!—[*Aside*] Far I design to lie with your wife.—[*To* Amanda] Far Gad's sake, madam, haw has your ladyship been able to sustain thus long, under the fatigue of a country life?

Aman. My life has been very far from that, my lord; it has been a very quiet one.

Lord Fop. Why, that's the fatigue I speak of, madam. For 'tis impassible to be quiet, without thinking: now thinking is to me the greatest fatigue in the world.

Aman. Does not your lordship love reading then?

Lord Fop. Oh, passionately, madam.—But I never think of what I read.

Ber. Why, how can your lordship read without thinking?

Lord Fop. O Lard!—can your ladyship pray without devotion, madam?

Aman. Well, I must own I think books the best entertainment in the world.

Lord Fop. I am so very much of your ladyship's mind, madam, that I have a private gallery, where I walk sometimes; it is furnished with nothing but books and looking-glasses. Madam, I have gilded 'em, and ranged 'em so prettily, before Gad, it is the most entertaining thing in the world to walk and look upon 'em.

Aman. Nay, I love a neat library, too; but 'tis, I think, the inside of a book should recommend it most to us.

Lord Fop. That, I must confess, I am nat altogether so fand of. Far to mind the inside of a book, is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Naw I think a man of quality and breeding may be much better diverted with the natural sprauts of his own. But to say the truth, madam, let a man love reading never so well, when once he comes to know this tawn, he finds so many better ways of passing the four-and-twenty hours, that 'twere ten thousand pities he should consume his time in that. Far example, madam, my life; my life, madam, is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides through such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of 'em. I rise, madam, about ten a-clack. I don't rise sooner, because 'tis the worst thing in the world for the complexion; nat that I pretend to be a beau; but a man must endeavor to look wholesome, lest he make so nauseous a figure in the side-bax, the ladies should be compelled to turn their eyes upon the play. So at

ten a-clack, I say, I rise. Naw, if I find 'tis a good day, I resalve to take a turn in the Park, and see the fine women; so huddle on my clothes, and get dressed by one. If it be nasty weather, I take a turn in the chocolate-house: where, as you walk, madam, you have the prettiest prospect in the world; you have looking-glasses all raund you.—But I'm afraid I tire the company.

Ber. Not at all. Pray go on.

Lord Fop. Why then, ladies, from thence I go to dinner at Lacket's, where you are so nicely and delicately served, that, stap my vitals! they shall compose you a dish no bigger than a saucer, shall come to fifty shillings. Between eating my dinner (and washing my mouth, ladies) I spend my time, till I go to the play; where, till nine a-clack, I entertain myself with looking upon the company; and usually dispose of one hour more in leading 'em aut. So there's twelve of the four-and-twenty pretty well over. The other twelve, madam, are disposed of in two articles: in the first four I toast myself drunk, and in t'other eight I sleep myself sober again. Thus, ladies, you see my life is an eternal raund of delights.

Love. 'Tis a heavenly one indeed.

Aman. But I thought, my lord, you beaux spent a great deal of your time in intrigues: you have given us no account of them yet.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. So; she would inquire into my amours.—That's jealousy:—she begins to be in love with me.—[*To* Amanda] Why, madam,—as to time for my intrigues, I usually make detachments of it from my other pleasures, according to the exigency. For your ladyship may please to take notice, that those who intrigue with women of quality, have rarely occasion for above half an hour at a time: people of that rank being under those decorums, they can seldom give you a langer view than will just serve to shoot 'em flying. So that the course of my other pleasures is not very much interrupted by my amours.

Love. But your lordship is now become a pillar of the state; you must attend the weighty affairs of the nation.

Lord Fop. Sir,—as to weighty affairs—I leave them to weighty heads. I never intend mine shall be a burden to my body.

Love. O but you'll find the House will expect your attendance.

Lord Fop. Sir, you'll find the House will compound for my appearance.

Love. But your friends will take it ill if you don't attend their particular causes.

Lord Fop. Not, sir, if I come time enough to give 'em my particular vote.

Ber. But pray, my lord, how do you dispose of yourself on Sundays? for that, methinks, is a day should hang wretchedly upon your hands.

Lord Fop. Why, faith, madam—Sunday—is a vile day, I must confess. I intend to move for leave to bring in a bill, that players may work upon it, as well as the hackney coaches. Though this I must say for the government, it leaves us the churches to entertain us.—But then again, they begin so abominable early, a man must rise by candle-light to get dressed by the psalm.

Ber. Pray which church does your lordship most oblige with your presence?

Lord Fop. Oh, St. James's, madam:—there's much the best company.

Aman. Is there good preaching, too?

Lord Fop. Why, faith, madam—I can't tell. A man must have very little to do there that can give an account of the sermon.

Ber. You can give us an account of the ladies at least?

Lord Fop. Or I deserve to be excommunicated.—There is my lady Tattle, my lady Prate, my lady Titter, my lady Leer, my lady Giggle, and my lady Grin. These sit in the front of the boxes, and all church-time are the prettiest company in the world, stap my vitals!—[*To* Amanda] Mayn't we hope for the honor to see your ladyship added to our society, madam?

Aman. Alas, my lord! I am the worst company in the world at church: I'm apt to mind the prayers, or the sermon, or——

Lord Fop. One is indeed strangely apt at church to mind what one should not do. But I hope, madam, at one time or other, I shall have the honor to lead your ladyship to your coach there.—[*Aside*] Methinks she seems strangely pleased with everything I say to her.—'Tis a vast pleasure to receive encouragement from a woman before her husband's face.—I have a good mind to pursue my conquest, and speak the thing plainly to her at once. Egad, I'll do't, and that in so cavalier a manner, she shall be surprised at it.—[*Aloud*] Ladies, I'll take my leave; I'm afraid I begin to grow troublesome with the length of my visit.

Aman. Your lordship's too entertaining to grow troublesome anywhere.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. That now was as much as if she had said—pray lie with me. I'll let her see I'm quick of apprehension.—[*To* Amanda] O Lard, madam! I had like to have forgot a secret, I must needs tell your ladyship.—[*To* Loveless] Ned, you must not be so jealous now as to listen.

Love. Not I, my lord; I am too fashionable a husband to pry into the secrets of my wife.

Lord Fop. [*to* Amanda, *squeezing her hand*]. I am in love with you to desperation, strike me speechless!

Aman. [*giving him a box o' the ear*]. Then

thus I return your passion.—An impudent fool!

Lord Fop. Gad's curse, madam, I'm a peer of the realm!

Love. Hey; what the devil do you affront my wife, sir? Nay then——

[*They draw and fight. The women run shrieking for help.*

Aman. Ah! What has my folly done? Help! Murder! help! part 'em, for heaven's sake!

Lord Fop. [*falling back, and leaning upon his sword*]. Ah—quite through the body!—stap my vitals!

Enter Servants.

Love. [*running to him*]. I hope I han't killed the fool however.—Bear him up!—Where's your wound?

Lord Fop. Just through the guts.

Love. Call a surgeon there.—Unbutton him quickly.

Lord Fop. Ay, pray make haste.

[*Exit Servant.*

Love. This mischief you may thank yourself for.

Lord Fop. I may so,—love's the devil indeed, Ned.

Enter Servant with Syringe.

Serv. Here's Mr. Syringe, sir, was just going by the door.

Lord Fop. He's the welcomest man alive.

Syr. Stand by, stand by, stand by! Pray, gentlemen, stand by. Lord have mercy upon us! did you never see a man run through the body before? Pray, stand by.

Lord Fop. Ah, Mr. Syringe—I'm a dead man!

Syr. A dead man and I by!—I should laugh to see that, egad!

Love. Prithee don't stand prating, but look upon his wound.

Syr. Why, what if I won't look upon his wound this hour, sir?

Love. Why, then he'll bleed to death, sir.

Syr. Why, then I'll fetch him to life again, sir.

Love. 'Slife, he's run through the guts, I tell thee.

Syr. Would he were run through the heart, I should get the more credit by his cure. Now I hope you're satisfied?—Come, now let me come at him; now let me come at him.—[*Viewing his wound*] Oons, what a gash is here!—Why, sir, a man may drive a coach and six horses into your body.

Lord Fop. Ho!

Syr. Why, what the devil, have you run the gentleman through with a scythe?—[*Aside*] A little prick between the skin and the ribs, that's all.

Love. Let me see his wound.

Syr. Then you shall dress it, sir; for if anybody looks upon it, I won't.

Love. Why, thou art the veriest coxcomb I ever saw.

Syr. Sir, I am not master of my trade for nothing.

Lord Fop. Surgeon!

Syr. Well, sir.

Lord Fop. Is there any hopes?

Syr. Hopes?—I can't tell.—What are you willing to give for your cure?

Lord Fop. Five hundred paunds, with pleasure.

Syr. Why, then perhaps there may be hopes. But we must avoid farther delay.—Here; help the gentleman into a chair, and carry him to my house presently, that's the properest place—[*Aside*] to bubble him out of his money.—[*Aloud*] Come, a chair, a chair quickly—there, in with him.

[*They put him into a chair.*

Lord Fop. Dear Loveless—adieu! If I die—I forgive thee; and if I live—I hope thou'lt do as much by me. I'm very sorry you and I should quarrel; but I hope here's an end on't, for if you are satisfied—I am.

Love. I shall hardly think it worth my prosecuting any farther, so you may be at rest, sir.

Lord Fop. Thou art a generous fellow, strike me dumb!—[*Aside*] But thou hast an impertinent wife, stap my vitals!

Syr. So, carry him off! carry him off! we shall have him prate himself into a fever by and by; carry him off.

[*Exit with* Lord Foppington.

Aman. Now on my knees, my dear, let me ask your pardon for my indiscretion, my own I never shall obtain.

Love. Oh, there's no harm done: you served him well.

Aman. He did indeed deserve it. But I tremble to think how dear my indiscreet resentment might have cost you.

Love. Oh, no matter, never trouble yourself about that.

Ber. For heaven's sake, what was't he did to you?

Aman. O nothing; he only squeezed me kindly by the hand, and frankly offered me a coxcomb's heart. I know I was to blame to resent it as I did, since nothing but a quarrel could ensue. But the fool so surprised me with his insolence, I was not mistress of my fingers.

Ber. Now, I dare swear, he thinks you had 'em at great command, they obeyed you so readily.

Enter Worthy.

Wor. Save you, save you, good people: I'm glad to find you all alive; I met a wounded peer carrying off. For heaven's sake, what was the matter?

Love. Oh, a trifle! He would have lain with my wife before my face, so she obliged him with a box o' th' ear, and I run him through the body: that was all.

Wor. Bagatelle on all sides. But, pray, madam, how long has this noble lord been a humble servant of yours?

Aman. This is the first I have heard on't. So I suppose 'tis his quality more than his love, has brought him into this adventure. He thinks his title an authentic passport to every woman's heart below the degree of a peeress.

Wor. He's coxcomb enough to think anything. But I would not have you brought into trouble for him. I hope there's no danger of his life?

Love. None at all. He's fallen into the hands of a roguish surgeon; I perceive designs to frighten a little money out of him. But I saw his wound, 'tis nothing; he may go to the play to-night, if he pleases.

Wor. I am glad you have corrected him without farther mischief. And now, sir, if these ladies have no farther service for you, you'll oblige me if you can go to the place I spoke to you of t'other day.

Love. With all my heart.—[*Aside*] Though I could wish, methinks, to stay and gaze a little longer on that creature. Good gods, how beautiful she is!—But what have I to do with beauty? I have already had my portion, and must not covet more.—[*To* Worthy] Come, sir, when you please.

Wor. Ladies, your servant.

Aman. Mr. Loveless, pray one word with you before you go.

Love. [*to* Worthy]. I'll overtake you, sir.—[*Exit* Worthy] What would my dear?

Aman. Only a woman's foolish question,—how do you like my cousin here?

Love. Jealous already, Amanda?

Aman. Not at all, I ask you for another reason.

Love. [*aside*]. Whate'er her reason be, I must not tell her true.—[*To* Amanda] Why, I confess she's handsome. But you must not think I slight your kinswoman, if I own to you, of all the women who may claim that character, she is the last would triumph in my heart.

Aman. I'm satisfied.

Love. Now tell me why you asked?

Aman. At night I will. Adieu.

Love. I'm yours. [*Kisses her and exit.*

Aman. [*aside*]. I'm glad to find he does not like her; for I have a great mind to persuade her to come and live with me.—[*Aloud*]. Now, dear Berinthia, let me inquire a little into your affairs: for I do assure you, I am enough your friend to interest myself in everything that concerns you.

Ber. You formerly have given me such proofs on't, I should be very much to blame to doubt it. I am sorry I have no secrets to trust you with, that I might convince you how entire a confidence I durst repose in you.

Aman. Why, is it possible that one so young and beautiful as you should live and have no secrets?

Ber. What secrets do you mean?

Aman. Lovers.

Ber. Oh, twenty! but not one secret amongst 'em. Lovers in this age have too much honor to do anything underhand; they do all above board.

Aman. That now, methinks, would make me hate a man.

Ber. But the women of the town are of another mind: for by this means a lady may (with the expense of a few coquette glances) lead twenty fools about in a string for two or three years together. Whereas, if she should allow 'em greater favors, and oblige 'em to secrecy, she would not keep one of 'em a fortnight.

Aman. There's something indeed in that to satisfy the vanity of a woman, but I can't comprehend how the men find their account in it.

Ber. Their entertainment, I must confess, is a riddle to me. For there's very few of 'em ever get farther than a bow and an ogle. I have half a score for my share, who follow me all over the town; and at the play, the Park, and the church, do (with their eyes) say the violentest things to me.—But I never hear any more of 'em.

Aman. What can be the reason of that?

Ber. One reason is, they don't know how to go farther. They have had so little practice, they don't understand the trade. But, besides their ignorance, you must know there is not one of my half score lovers but what follows half a score mistresses. Now, their affections being divided amongst so many, are not strong enough for any one to make 'em pursue her to the purpose. Like a young puppy in a warren, they have a flirt at all, and catch none.

Aman. Yet they seem to have a torrent of love to dispose of.

Ber. They have so. But 'tis like the rivers of a modern philosopher, (whose works, though a woman, I have read,) it sets out with a violent stream, splits in a thousand branches, and is all lost in the sands.

Aman. But do you think this river of love runs all its course without doing any mischief? Do you think it overflows nothing?

Ber. O yes; 'tis true, it never breaks into anybody's ground that has the least fence about it; but it overflows all the commons that lie in its way. And this is the utmost achievement of those dreadful champions in the field of love—the beaux.

Aman. But prithee, Berinthia, instruct me a little farther; for I'm so great a novice I am almost ashamed on't. My husband's leaving me whilst I was young and fond threw me into that depth of discontent, that ever since I have led so private and recluse a life, my ignorance is scarce conceivable. I therefore fain would be instructed. Not (heaven knows) that what you call intrigues have any charms for me; my love and principles are too well fixed. The practic part of all unlawful love is——

Ber. Oh, 'tis abominable! But for the speculative; that we must all confess is entertaining. The conversation of all the virtuous women in the town turns upon that and new clothes.

Aman. Pray be so just then to me, to believe, 'tis with a world of innocency I would inquire, whether you think those women we call women of reputation, do so really 'scape all other men, as they do those shadows of 'em, the beaux.

Ber. O no, Amanda; there are a sort of men make dreadful work amongst 'em, men that may be called the beaux' antipathy; for they agree in nothing but walking upon two legs.—These have brains; the beau has none. These are in love with their mistress; the beau with himself. They take care of her reputation; he's industrious to destroy it. They are decent; he's a fop. They are sound; he's rotten. They are men; he's an ass.

Aman. If this be their character, I fancy we had here e'en now a pattern of 'em both.

Ber. His lordship and Mr. Worthy?

Aman. The same.

Ber. As for the lord, he's eminently so; and for the other, I can assure you, there's not a man in town who has a better interest with the women, that are worth having an interest with. But 'tis all private: he's like a back-stair minister at court, who, whilst the reputed favorites are sauntering in the bedchamber, is ruling the roost in the closet.

Aman. He answers then the opinion I had ever of him. Heavens! What a difference there is between a man like him, and that vain nauseous fop, Sir Novelty.—[*Taking her hand*] I must acquaint you with a secret, cousin. 'Tis not that fool alone has talked to me of love. Worthy has been tampering, too. 'Tis true, he has done't in vain: not all his charms or art have power to shake me. My love, my duty, and my virtue, are such faithful guards, I need not fear my heart should e'er betray me. But what I wonder at is this: I find I did not start at his proposal, as when it came from one whom I contemned. I therefore mention his attempt, that I may learn from you whence it proceeds; that vice (which cannot change its nature) should so far change at least its shape, as that the self-same crime proposed from one shall seem a monster gaping at your ruin; when from another it shall look so kind, as though it were your friend, and never meant to harm you. Whence, think you, can this difference proceed? For 'tis not love, heaven knows.

Ber. O no; I would not for the world believe it were. But possibly, should there a dreadful sentence pass upon you, to undergo the rage of both their passions; the pain you apprehend from one might seem so trivial to the other, the danger would not quite so much alarm you.

Aman. Fie, fie, Berinthia! you would indeed alarm me, could you incline me to a thought, that all the merit of mankind combined could shake that tender love I bear my husband. No! he sits triumphant in my heart, and nothing can dethrone him.

Ber. But should he abdicate again, do you think you should preserve the vacant throne ten tedious winters more in hopes of his return?

Aman. Indeed, I think I should. Though I confess, after those obligations he has to me, should he abandon me once more, my heart would grow extremely urgent with me to root him thence, and cast him out forever.

Ber. Were I that thing they call a slighted wife, somebody should run the risk of being that thing they call—a husband.

Aman. O fie, Berinthia! no revenge should ever be taken against a husband. But to wrong his bed is a vengeance, which of all vengeance——

Ber. Is the sweetest, ha! ha! ha! Don't I talk madly?

Aman. Madly, indeed.

Ber. Yet I'm very innocent.

Aman. That I dare swear you are. I know how to make allowances for your humor. You were always very entertaining company; but I find since marriage and widowhood have shown you the world a little, you are very much improved.

Ber. [*aside*]. Alack a-day, there has gone more than that to improve me, if she knew all!

Aman. For heaven's sake, Berinthia, tell me what way I shall take to persuade you to come and live with me?

Ber. Why, one way in the world there is—and but one.

Aman. Pray which is that?

Ber. It is, to assure me—I shall be very welcome.

Aman. If that be all, you shall e'en lie here to-night.

Ber. To-night!

Aman. Yes, to-night.

Ber. Why, the people where I lodge will think me mad.

Aman. Let 'em think what they please.

Ber. Say you so, Amanda? Why, then they shall think what they please: for I'm a young widow, and I care not what anybody thinks. Ah, Amanda, it's a delicious thing to be a young widow!

Aman. You'll hardly make me think so.

Ber. Puh! because you are in love with your husband: but that is not every woman's case.

Aman. I hope 'twas yours, at least.

Ber. Mine, say ye? Now I have a great mind to tell you a lie, but I should do it so awkwardly you'd find me out.

Aman. Then e'en speak the truth.

Ber. Shall I?—Then after all I did love him, Amanda—as a nun does penance.

Aman. Why did not you refuse to marry him, then?

Ber. Because my mother would have whipped me.

Aman. How did you live together?

Ber. Like man and wife, asunder. He loved the country, I the town. He hawks and hounds, I coaches and equipage. He eating and drinking, I carding and playing. He the sound of a horn, I the squeak of a fiddle. We were dull company at table, worse a-bed. Whenever we met, we gave one another the spleen; and never agreed but once, which was about lying alone.

Aman. But tell me one thing, truly and sincerely.

Ber. What's that?

Aman. Notwithstanding all these jars, did not his death at last extremely trouble you?

Ber. O yes. Not that my present pangs were so very violent, but the afterpains were intolerable. I was forced to wear a beastly widow's band a twelvemonth for't.

Aman. Women, I find, have different inclination[s].

Ber. Women, I find, keep different company. When your husband ran away from you, if you had fallen into some of my acquaintance, 'twould have saved you many a tear. But you go and live with a grandmother, a bishop, and an old nurse; which was enough to make any woman break her heart for her husband. Pray, Amanda, if ever you are a widow again, keep yourself so, as I do.

Aman. Why! do you then resolve you'll never marry?

Ber. O no; I resolve I will.

Aman. How so?

Ber. That I never may.

Aman. You banter me.

Ber. Indeed I don't. But I consider I'm a woman, and form my resolutions accordingly.

Aman. Well, my opinion is, form what resolution you will, matrimony will be the end on't.

Ber. Faith it won't.

Aman. How do you know?

Ber. I'm sure on't.

Aman. Why, do you think 'tis impossible for you to fall in love?

Ber. No.

Aman. Nay, but to grow so passionately fond, that nothing but the man you love can give you rest.

Ber. Well, what then?

Aman. Why, then you'll marry him.

Ber. How do you know that?

Aman. Why, what can you do else?

Ber. Nothing—but sit and cry.

Aman. Psha!

Ber. Ah, poor Amanda! you have led a country life: but if you'll consult the widows of this town, they'll tell you you should never take a lease of a house you can hire for a quarter's warning. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I

A Room in LORD FOPPINGTON'S *House.*

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON *and Servant.*

Lord Fop. Hey, fellow, let the coach come to the door.

Serv. Will your lordship venture so soon to expose yourself to the weather?

Lord Fop. Sir, I will venture as soon as I can, to expose myself to the ladies; though give me my cloak, however: for in that sidebox, what between the air that comes in at the door on one side, and the intolerable warmth of the masks on t'other, a man gets so many heats and colds, 'twould destroy the canstitution of a harse.

Serv. [*putting on his cloak*]. I wish your lordship would please to keep house a little longer; I'm afraid your honor does not well consider your wound.

Lord Fop. My wound!—I would not be in eclipse another day, though I had as many wounds in my guts as I have had in my heart. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter YOUNG FASHION.

Fash. Brother, your servant. How do you find yourself to-day?

Lord Fop. So well, that I have ardered my coach to the door: so there's no great danger of death this baut, Tam.

Fash. I'm very glad of it.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. That I believe's a lie. —[*Aloud*] Prithee, Tam, tell me one thing: did nat your heart cut a caper up to your mauth, when you heard I was run through the bady?

Fash. Why do you think it should?

Lord Fop. Because. I remember mine did so, when I heard my father was shat through the head.

Fash. It then did very ill.

Lord Fop. Prithee, why so?

Fash. Because he used you very well.

Lord Fop. Well?—naw, strike me dumb! he starved me. He has let me want a thausand women for want of a thausand paund.

Fash. Then he hindered you from making a great many ill bargains, for I think no woman is worth money that will take money.

Lord Fop. If I were a younger brother, I should think so too.

Fash. Why, is it possible you can value a woman that's to be bought?

Lord Fop. Prithee, why not as well as a padnag?

Fash. Because a woman has a heart to dispose of; a horse has none.

Lord Fop. Look you, Tam, of all things that belang to a woman, I have an aversion to her heart. Far when once a woman has given you her heart, you can never get rid of the rest of her bady.

Fash. This is strange doctrine. But pray in your amours how is it with your own heart?

Lord Fop. Why, my heart in my amours—is like—my heart aut of my amours; *à la glace.* My bady, Tam, is a watch; and my heart is the pendulum to it; whilst the finger runs raund to every hour in the circle, that still beats the same time.

Fash. Then you are seldom much in love?

Lord Fop. Never, stap my vitals!

Fash. Why then did you make all this bustle about Amanda?

Lord Fop. Because she was a woman of an insolent virtue, and I thought myself piqued in honor to debauch her.

Fash. Very well.—[*Aside*] Here's a rare fellow for you, to have the spending of five thousand pounds a year! But now for my business with him.—[*To* Lord Foppington] Brother, though I know to talk to you of business (especially of money) is a theme not quite so entertaining to you as that of the ladies, my necessities are such, I hope you'll have patience to hear me.

Lord Fop. The greatness of your necessities, Tam, is the worst argument in the world for your being patiently heard. I do believe you are going to make me a very good speech, but, strike me dumb! it has the worst beginning of any speech I have heard this twelvemonth.

Fash. I'm very sorry you think so.

Lord Fop. I do believe thou art. But come, let's know thy affair quickly; far 'tis a new play, and I shall be so rumpled and squeezed with pressing through the crawd, to get to my servant, the women will think I have lain all night in my clothes.

Fash. Why, then, (that I may not be the author of so great a misfortune) my case in a word is this. The necessary expenses of my travels have so much exceeded the wretched income of my annuity, that I have been forced to mortgage it for five hundred pounds, which is spent; so that unless you are so kind to assist me in redeeming it, I know no remedy but to go take a purse.

Lord Fop. Why, faith, Tam—to give you my sense of the thing, I do think taking a purse the best remedy in the world: for if you succeed, you are relieved that way; if you are taken—you are relieved t'other.

Fash. I'm glad to see you are in so pleasant a humor. I hope I shall find the effects on't.

Lord Fop. Why, do you then really think it a reasonable thing I should give you five hundred paunds?

Fash. I do not ask it as a due, brother, I am willing to receive it as a favor.

Lord Fop. Thau art willing to receive it anyhaw, strike me speechless! But these are damned times to give money in, taxes are so great, repairs so exorbitant, tenants such rogues, and periwigs so dear, that the devil take me, I am reduced to that extremity in my cash. I have been forced to retrench in that one article of sweet pawder, till I have braught it dawn to five guineas a manth. Naw judge, Tam, whether I can spare you five hundred paunds.

Fash. If you can't I must starve, that's all.—[*Aside*] Damn him!

Lord Fop. All I can say is, you should have been a better husband.

Fash. Oons, if you can't live upon five thousand a year, how do you think I should do't upon two hundred?

Lord Fop. Don't be in a passion, Tam; far passion is the most unbecoming thing in the world—to the face. Look you, I don't love to say anything to you to make you malancholy; but upon this occasion I must take leave to put you in mind that a running horse does require more attendance than a coach-horse. Nature has made some difference 'twixt you and I.

Fash. Yes, she has made you older.—[*Aside*] Pox take her!

Lord Fop. That is nat all, Tam.

Fash. Why, what is there else?

Lord Fop. [*looking first upon himself, then upon his brother*] Ask the ladies.

Fash. Why, thou essence bottle! thou musk cat! dost thou then think thou hast any advantage over me but what Fortune has given thee?

Lord Fop. I do—stap my vitals!

Fash. Now, by all that's great and powerful, thou art the prince of coxcombs!

Lord Fop. Sir—I am praud of being at the head of so prevailing a party.

Fash. Will nothing then provoke thee? Draw, coward!

Lord Fop. Look you, Tam, you know I have always taken you for a mighty dull fellow, and here is one of the foolishest plats broke out that I have seen a long time. Your paverty makes your life so burdensome to you, you would provoke me to a quarrel, in hopes either to slip through my lungs into my estate, or to get yourself run through the guts, to put an end to your pain. But I will disappoint you in both your designs; far, with the temper of a philasapher, and the discretion of a statesman—I will go to the play with my sword in my scabbard. [*Exit.*

Fash. So! Farewell, snuff-box! And now, conscience, I defy thee.—Lory!

Enter Lory.

Lory. Sir!

Fash. Here's rare news, Lory; his lordship has given me a pill has purged off all my scruples.

Lory. Then my heart's at ease again. For I have been in a lamentable fright, sir, ever since your conscience had the impudence to intrude into your company.

Fash. Be at peace, it will come there no more: my brother has given it a wring by the nose, and I have kicked it down stairs. So run away to the inn; get the horses ready quickly, and bring 'em to old Coupler's, without a moment's delay.

Lory. Then, sir, you are going straight about the fortune?

Fash. I am. Away! fly, Lory!

Lory. The happiest day I ever saw. I'm upon the wing already. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II

A Garden.

Enter Loveless *and Servant.*

Love. Is my wife within?

Serv. No, sir, she has been gone out this half hour.

Love. 'Tis well, leave me. [*Exit Servant.*

Sure fate has yet some business to be done,
Before Amanda's heart and mine must rest;
Else, why amongst those legions of her sex,
Which throng the world,
Should she pick out for her companion
The only one on earth
Whom nature has endow'd for her undoing?
Undoing, was't, I said!—who shall undo her?
Is not her empire fix'd? am I not hers?
Did she not rescue me, a grovelling slave,
When chained and bound by that black tyrant vice,
I labored in his vilest drudgery?
Did she not ransom me, and set me free?
Nay, more: when by my follies sunk
To a poor, tattered, despicable beggar,
Did she not lift me up to envied fortune?
Give me herself, and all that she possessed,
Without a thought of more return,
Than what a poor repenting heart might make her?
Han't she done this? And if she has,
Am I not strongly bound to love her for it?
To love her!—Why, do I not love her then?
By earth and heaven I do!
Nay, I have demonstration that I do:
For I would sacrifice my life to serve her.
Yet hold—if laying down my life
Be demonstration of my love,
What is't I feel in favor of Berinthia?

For should she be in danger, methinks I could incline to risk it for her service too; and yet I do not love her. How then subsists my proof?—Oh, I have found it out! What I would do for one, is demonstration of my love; and if I'd do as much for t'other; if there is demonstration of my friendship—Ay, it must be so. I find I'm very much her friend.—Yet let me ask myself one puzzling question more: Whence springs this mighty friendship all at once? For our acquaintance is of later date. Now friendship's said to be a plant of tedious growth; its root composed of tender fibres, nice in their taste, cautious in spreading, checked with the least corruption in the soil; long ere it take, and longer still ere it appear to do so: whilst mine is in a moment shot so high, and fix'd so fast, it seems beyond the power of storms to shake it. I doubt it thrives too fast. [*Musing.*

Enter Berinthia.

Ha, she here!—Nay, then take heed, my heart, for there are dangers towards.

Ber. What makes you look so thoughtful, sir? I hope you are not ill.

Love. I was debating, madam, whether I was so or not; and that was it which made me look so thoughtful.

Ber. Is it then so hard a matter to decide? I thought all people had been acquainted with their own bodies, though few people know their own minds.

Love. What if the distemper, I suspect, be in the mind?

Ber. Why then I'll undertake to prescribe you a cure.

Love. Alas! you undertake you know not what.

Ber. So far at least then allow me to be a physician.

Love. Nay, I'll allow you so yet farther: for I have reason to believe, should I put myself into your hands, you would increase my distemper.

Ber. Perhaps I might have reasons from

the college not to be too quick in your cure; but 'tis possible I might find ways to give you often ease, sir.

Love. Were I but sure of that, I'd quickly lay my case before you.

Ber. Whether you are sure of it or no, what risk do you run in trying?

Love. Oh! a very great one.

Ber. How?

Love. You might betray my distemper to my wife.

Ber. And so lose all my practice.

Love. Will you then keep my secret?

Ber. I will, if it don't burst me.

Love. Swear.

Ber. I do.

Love. By what?

Ber. By woman.

Love. That's swearing by my deity. Do it by your own, or I shan't believe you.

Ber. By man, then.

Love. I'm satisfied. Now hear my symptoms, and give me your advice. The first were these:

When 'twas my chance to see you at the play,
A random glance you threw at first alarmed me,
I could not turn my eyes from whence the danger came.
I gazed upon you till you shot again,
And then my fears came on me.
My heart began to pant, my limbs to tremble,
My blood grew thin, my pulse beat quick, my eyes
Grew hot and dim, and all the frame of nature
Shook with apprehension.
'Tis true, some small recruits of resolution
My manhood brought to my assistance;
And by their help I made a stand a while,
But found at last your arrows flew so thick,
They could not fail to pierce me; so left the field,
And fled for shelter to Amanda's arms.
What think you of these symptoms, pray?

Ber. Feverish, every one of 'em. But what relief, pray, did your wife afford you?

Love. Why, instantly she let me blood; which for the present much assuaged my flame. But when I saw you, out it burst again, and raged with greater fury than before. Nay, since you now appear, 'tis so increased, that in a moment, if you do not help me, I shall, whilst you look on, consume to ashes. [*Taking hold of her hand.*

Ber. [*breaking from him*]. O Lard, let me go! 'Tis the plague, and we shall all be infected.

Love. [*catching her in his arms, and kissing her*]. Then we'll die together, my charming angel!

Ber. O Ged—the devil's in you!—Lord, let me go, here's somebody coming.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lady's come home, and desires to speak with you. She's in her chamber.

Love. Tell her I'm coming.—[*Exit Servant. To* Berinthia] But before I go, one glass of nectar more to drink her health.

Ber. Stand off, or I shall hate you, by heavens!

Love. [*kissing her*]. In matters of love, a woman's oath is no more to be minded than a man's.

Ber. Um——

Enter Worthy.

Wor. [*aside*]. Ha! what's here? My old mistress, and so close, i'faith! I would not spoil her sport for the universe. [*He retires.*

Ber. O Ged!—Now do I pray to heaven,—[*Exit* Loveless *running*] with all my heart and soul, that the devil in hell may take me, if ever—I was better pleased in my life!—This man has bewitched me, that's certain.—[*Sighing*] Well, I am condemned; but, thanks to heaven, I feel myself each moment more and more prepared for my execution. Nay, to that degree, I don't perceive I have the least fear of dying. No, I find, let the executioner be but a man, and there's nothing will suffer with more resolution than a woman. Well, I never had but one intrigue yet—but I confess I long to have another. Pray heaven it end as the first did though, that we may both grow weary at a time; for 'tis a melancholy thing for lovers to outlive one another.

Enter Worthy.

Wor. [*aside*]. This discovery's a lucky one, I hope to make a happy use on't. That gentlewoman there is no fool; so I shall be able to make her understand her interest.—[*Aloud*] Your servant, madam; I need not ask you how you do, you have got so good a color.

Ber. No better than I used to have, I suppose.

Wor. A little more blood in your cheeks.

Ber. The weather's hot.

Wor. If it were not, a woman may have a color.

Ber. What do you mean by that?

Wor. Nothing.

Ber. Why do you smile then?

Wor. Because the weather's hot.

Ber. You'll never leave roguing, I see that.

Wor. [*putting his finger to his nose*]. You'll never leave—I see that.

Ber. Well, I can't imagine what you drive at. Pray tell me what you mean?

Wor. Do you tell me; it's the same thing.

Ber. I can't.

Wor. Guess!

Ber. I shall guess wrong.

Wor. Indeed you won't.

Ber. Psha! either tell, or let it alone.

Wor. Nay, rather than let it alone, I will tell. But first I must put you in mind, that after what has passed 'twixt you and I, very few things ought to be secrets between us.

Ber. Why, what secrets do we hide? I know of none.

Wor. Yes, there are two; one I have hid from you, and t'other you would hide from me. You are fond of Loveless, which I have discovered; and I am fond of his wife——

Ber. Which I have discovered.

Wor. Very well, now I confess your discovery to be true: what do you say to mine?

Ber. Why, I confess—I would swear 'twere false, if I thought you were fool enough to believe me.

Wor. Now I am almost in love with you again. Nay, I don't know but I might be quite so, had I made one short campaign with Amanda. Therefore, if you find 'twould tickle your vanity to bring me down once more to your lure, e'en help me quickly to dispatch her business, that I may have nothing else to do, but to apply myself to yours.

Ber. Do you then think, sir, I am old enough to be a bawd?

Wor. No, but I think you are wise enough to——

Ber. To do what?

Wor. To hoodwink Amanda with a gallant, that she mayn't see who is her husband's mistress.

Ber. [*aside*]. He has reason.—The hint's a good one.

Wor. Well, madam, what think you on't?

Ber. I think you are so much a deeper politician in these affairs than I am, that I ought to have a very great regard to your advice.

Wor. Then give me leave to put you in mind, that the most easy, safe, and pleasant situation for your own amour, is the house in which you now are; provided you keep Amanda from any sort of suspicion. That the way to do that, is to engage her in an intrigue of her own, making yourself her confidante. And the way to bring her to intrigue, is to make her jealous of her husband in a wrong place; which the more you foment, the less you'll be suspected. This is my scheme, in short; which if you follow as you should do, my dear Berinthia, we may all four pass the winter very pleasantly.

Ber. Well, I could be glad to have nobody's sins to answer for but my own. But where there is a necessity——

Wor. Right; as you say, where there is a necessity, a Christian is bound to help his neighbor. So, good Berinthia, lose no time, but let us begin the dance as fast as we can.

Ber. Not till the fiddles are in tune, pray, sir. Your lady's strings will be very apt to fly, I can tell you that, if they are wound up too hastily. But if you'll have patience to screw 'em to their pitch by degrees, I don't doubt but she may endure to be played upon.

Wor. Ay, and will make admirable music too, or I'm mistaken. But have you had no private closet discourse with her yet about males and females, and so forth, which may give you hopes in her constitution, for I know her morals are the devil against us?

Ber. I have had so much discourse with her, that I believe, were she once cured of her fondness to her husband, the fortress of her virtue would not be so impregnable as she fancies.

Wor. What! she runs, I'll warrant you, into that common mistake of fond wives, who conclude themselves virtuous, because they can refuse a man they don't like, when they have got one they do.

Ber. True; and therefore I think 'tis a presumptuous thing in a woman to assume the name of virtuous, till she has heartily hated her husband, and been soundly in love with somebody else. Whom, if she has withstood,—then—much good may it do her.

Wor. Well, so much for her virtue. Now, one word of her inclinations, and every one to their post. What opinion do you find she has of me?

Ber. What you could wish; she thinks you handsome and discreet.

Wor. Good; that's thinking half-seas over. One tide more brings us into port.

Ber. Perhaps it may, though still remember, there's a difficult bar to pass.

Wor. I know there is, but I don't question I shall get well over it, by the help of such a pilot.

Ber. You may depend upon your pilot, she'll do the best she can; so weigh anchor and begone as soon as you please.

Wor. I'm under sail already. Adieu!

Ber. *Bon voyage!*—[*Exit* Worthy.] So, here's fine work! What a business have I undertaken! I'm a very pretty gentlewoman truly! But there was no avoiding it; he'd have ruined me, if I had refused him. Besides, faith, I begin to fancy there may be as much pleasure in carrying on another body's intrigue as one's own. This at least is certain, it exercises almost all the entertaining faculties of a woman; for there's employment for hypocrisy, invention, deceit, flattery, mischief, and lying.

Enter Amanda, *her Woman following her.*

Woman. If you please, madam, only to say, whether you'll have me buy 'em or not.

Aman. Yes, no, go fiddle! I care not what you do. Prithee leave me.

Woman. I have done. [*Exit.*

Ber. What in the name of Jove's the matter with you?

Aman. The matter, Berinthia! I'm almost mad, I'm plagued to death.

Ber. Who is it that plagues you?

Aman. Who do you think should plague a wife, but her husband?

Ber. O ho, is it come to that? We shall have you wish yourself a widow by and by.

Aman. Would I were anything but what I am! A base, ungrateful man, after what I have done for him, to use me thus!

Ber. What, he has been ogling now, I'll warrant you!

Aman. Yes, he has been ogling.

Ber. And so you are jealous? Is that all?

Aman. That all! Is jealousy then nothing?

Ber. It should be nothing, if I were in your case.

Aman. Why, what would you do?

Ber. I'd cure myself.

Aman. How?

Ber. Let blood in the fond vein: care as little for my husband as he did for me.

Aman. That would not stop his course.

Ber. Nor nothing else, when the wind's in the warm corner. Look you, Amanda, you may build castles in the air, and fume, and fret, and grow thin and lean, and pale and ugly, if you please. But I tell you, no man worth having is true to his wife, or ever was, or ever will be so.

Aman. Do you then really think he's false to me? For I did but suspect him.

Ber. Think so! I know he's so.

Aman. Is it possible? Pray tell me what you know.

Ber. Don't press me then to name names, for that I have sworn I won't do.

Aman. Well, I won't; but let me know all you can without perjury.

Ber. I'll let you know enough to prevent any wise woman's dying of the pip; and I hope you'll pluck up your spirits, and show upon occasion you can be as good a wife as the best of 'em.

Aman. Well, what a woman can do I'll endeavor.

Ber. Oh, a woman can do a great deal, if once she sets her mind to it. Therefore pray don't stand trifling any longer, and teasing yourself with this and that, and your love and your virtue, and I know not what: but resolve to hold up your head, get a-tiptoe, and look over 'em all; for to my certain knowledge your husband is a pickeering elsewhere.

Aman. You are sure on't?

Ber. Positively; he fell in love at the play.

Aman. Right, the very same. Do you know the ugly thing?

Ber. Yes, I know her well enough; but she's not such an ugly thing neither.

Aman. Is she very handsome?

Ber. Truly I think so.

Aman. Hey ho!

Ber. What do you sigh for now?

Aman. Oh, my heart!

Ber. [*aside*]. Only the pangs of nature; she's in labor of her love; heaven send her a quick delivery, I'm sure she has a good midwife.

Aman. I'm very ill, I must go to my chamber. Dear Berinthia, don't leave me a moment.

Ber. No, don't fear.—[*Aside*] I'll see you safe brought to bed, I'll warrant you.

[*Exeunt*, Amanda *leaning upon* Berinthia.

Scene III

Sir Tunbelly's *Country House.*

Enter Young Fashion *and* Lory.

Fash. So, here's our inheritance, Lory, if we can but get into possession. But methinks the seat of our family looks like Noah's ark, as if the chief part on't were designed for the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field.

Lory. Pray, sir, don't let your head run upon the orders of building here; get but the heiress, let the devil take the house.

Fash. Get but the house, let the devil take the heiress, I say; at least if she be as old Coupler describes her. But come, we have no time to squander. Knock at the door.—[Lory *knocks two or three times*] What the devil, have they got no ears in this house? Knock harder.

Lory. Egad, sir, this will prove some enchanted castle; we shall have the giant come out by and by with his club, and beat our brains out. [*Knocks again.*

Fash. Hush! they come.

Serv. [*from within*]. Who is there?

Lory. Open the door and see. Is that your country breeding?

Serv. Ay, but two words to a bargain.—Tummas, is the blunderbuss primed?

Fash. Oons, give 'em good words, Lory; we shall be shot here a fortune-catching.

Lory. Egad, sir, I think y'are in the right on't.—Ho! Mr. What-d'ye-call-um.

[*Servant appears at the window with a blunderbuss.*

Serv. Weall, naw what's yare business?

Fash. Nothing, sir, but to wait upon Sir Tunbelly, with your leave.

Serv. To weat upon Sir Tunbelly! Why, you'll find that's just as Sir Tunbelly pleases.

Fash. But will you do me the favor, sir, to know whether Sir Tunbelly pleases or not?

Serv. Why, look you, do you see, with good words much may be done.—Ralph, go thy weas, and ask Sir Tunbelly if he pleases to be waited upon. And dost hear? Call to nurse that she may lock up Miss Hoyden before the geat's open.

Fash. D'ye hear that, Lory?

Lory. Ay, sir, I'm afraid we shall find a difficult job on't. Pray Heaven that old rogue Coupler han't sent us to fetch milk out of the gunroom.

Fash. I'll warrant thee all will go well. See, the door opens.

Enter Sir Tunbelly, *with his Servants armed with guns, clubs, pitchforks, scythes, etc.*

Lory [*running behind his master*]. O Lord! O Lord! O Lord! We are both dead men!

Fash. Take heed, fool! Thy fear will ruin us.

Lory. My fear, sir! 'Sdeath, sir, I fear nothing.—[*Aside*] Would I were well up to the chin in a horsepond!

Sir Tun. Who is it here has any business with me?

Fash. Sir, 'tis I, if your name be Sir Tunbelly Clumsey.

Sir Tun. Sir, my name is Sir Tunbelly Clumsey, whether you have any business with me or not. So you see I am not ashamed of my name—nor my face neither.

Fash. Sir, you have no cause, that I know of.

Sir Tun. Sir, if you have no cause neither, I desire to know who you are; for till I know your name, I shall not ask you to come into my house; and when I know your name—'tis six to four I don't ask you neither.

Fash. [*giving him a letter*]. Sir, I hope you'll find this letter an authentic passport.

Sir Tun. Cod's my life! I ask your lordship's pardon ten thousand times.—[*To a Servant*] Here, run in a-doors quickly. Get a Scotch-coal fire in the great parlor; set all the Turkey-work chairs in their places; get the great brass candlesticks out, and be sure stick the sockets full of laurel, run! —[*Turning to* Young Fashion] My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon.—[*To other Servants*] And do you hear, run away to nurse, bid her let Miss Hoyden loose again, and if it was not shifting day, let her put on a clean tucker, quick!—[*Exeunt Servants confusedly.* *To* Young Fashion] I hope your honor will excuse the disorder of my family; we are not used to receive men of your lordship's great quality every day. Pray where are your coaches and servants, my lord?

Fash. Sir, that I might give you and your fair daughter a proof how impatient I am to be nearer akin to you, I left my equipage to follow me, and came away post with only one servant.

Sir Tun. Your lordship does me too much honor. It was exposing your person to too much fatigue and danger, I protest it was. But my daughter shall endeavor to make you what amends she can; and though I say it that should not say it—Hoyden has charms.

Fash. Sir, I am not a stranger to them, though I am to her. Common fame has done her justice.

Sir Tun. My lord, I am common fame's very grateful humble servant. My lord—my girl's young, Hoyden is young, my lord; but this I must say for her, what she wants in art, she has by nature; what she wants in experience, she has in breeding; and what's wanting in her age, is made good in her constitution. So pray, my lord, walk in: pray, my lord, walk in.

Fash. Sir, I wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

A Room in the same.

Miss Hoyden *sola.*

Hoyd. Sure, never nobody was used as I am. I know well enough what other girls do, for all they think to make a fool of me. It's well I have a husband coming, or, ecod, I'd marry the baker, I would so! Nobody can knock at the gate, but presently I must be locked up; and here's the young greyhound bitch can run loose about the house all day long, she can; 'tis very well.

Nurse [*without*]. Miss Hoyden! miss! miss! miss! Miss Hoyden.

Enter Nurse.

Hoyd. Well, what do you make such a noise for, ha? what do you din a body's ears for? Can't one be at quiet for you?

Nurse. What do I din your ears for! Here's one come will din your ears for you.

Hoyd. What care I who's come? I care not a fig who comes, nor who goes, as long as I must be locked up like the ale-cellar.

Nurse. That, miss, is for fear you should be drank before you are ripe.

Hoyd. Oh, don't trouble your head about that; I'm as ripe as you, though not so mellow.

Nurse. Very well; now have I a good mind to lock you up again, and not let you see my lord to-night.

Hoyd. My lord! Why, is my husband come?

Nurse. Yes, marry he is, and a goodly person, too.

Hoyd. [*hugging Nurse*]. O my dear nurse!

forgive me this once, and I'll never misuse you again; no, if I do, you shall give me three thumps on the back, and a great pinch by the cheek.

Nurse. Ah, the poor thing, see how it melts. It's as full of good-nature as an egg's full of meat.

Hoyd. But, my dear nurse, don't lie now; is he come by your troth?

Nurse. Yes, by my truly, is he.

Hoyd. O Lord! I'll go put on my laced smock, though I'm whipped till the blood run down my heels for't. [*Exit running.*

Nurse. Eh—the Lord succor thee! How thou art delighted. [*Exit after her.*

Scene V

Another Room in the same.

Enter Sir Tunbelly *and* Young Fashion.

A Servant with wine.

Sir Tun. My lord, I am proud of the honor to see your lordship within my doors; and I humbly crave leave to bid you welcome in a cup of sack wine.

Fash. Sir, to your daughter's health. [*Drinks.*

Sir Tun. Ah, poor girl, she'll be scared out of her wits on her wedding-night; for, honestly speaking, she does not know a man from a woman but by his beard and his breeches.

Fash. Sir, I don't doubt but she has a virtuous education, which with the rest of her merit makes me long to see her mine; I wish you would dispense with the canonical hour, and let it be this very night.

Sir Tun. Oh, not so soon neither! that's shooting my girl before you bid her stand. No, give her fair warning, we'll sign and seal to-night, if you please; and this day sevennight—let the jade look to her quarters.

Fash. This day se'nnight!—why, what, do you take me for a ghost, sir? 'Slife, sir, I'm made of flesh and blood, and bones and sinews, and can no more live a week without your daughter—[*Aside*] than I can live a month with her.

Sir Tun. Oh, I'll warrant you, my hero; young men are hot, I know, but they don't boil over at that rate, neither. Besides, my wench's wedding-gown is not come home yet.

Fash. Oh, no matter, sir, I'll take her in her shift.—[*Aside*] A pox of this old fellow! he'll delay the business till my damned star finds me out and discovers me.—[*To* Sir Tunbelly] Pray, sir, let it be done without ceremony, 'twill save money.

Sir Tun. Money!—Save money when Hoyden's to be married! Udswoons, I'll give my wench a wedding-dinner, though I go to grass with the King of Assyria for't; and such a dinner it shall be, as is not to be cooked in the poaching of an egg. Therefore, my noble lord, have a little patience, we'll go an look over our deeds and settlements immediately; and as for your bride, though you may be sharp-set before she's quite ready, I'll engage for my girl, she stays your stomach at last. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

Scene I

A Room in Sir Tunbelly Clumsey's *Country House.*

Enter Miss Hoyden *and Nurse.*

Nurse. Well, miss, how do you like your husband that is to be?

Hoyd. O Lord, nurse! I'm so overjoyed I can scarce contain myself.

Nurse. Oh, but you must have a care of being too fond; for men now-a-days hate a woman that loves 'em.

Hoyd. Love him! why, do you think I love him, nurse? Ecod, I would not care if he were hanged, so I were but once married to him!—No—that which pleases me, is to think what work I'll make when I get to London; for when I am a wife and a lady both, nurse, ecod, I'll flaunt it with the best of 'em.

Nurse. Look, look, if his honor be not coming again to you. Now, if I were sure you would behave yourself handsomely, and not disgrace me that have brought you up, I'd leave you alone together.

Hoyd. That's my best nurse, do as you would be done by; trust us together this once, and if I don't show my breeding from the head to the foot of me, may I be twice married, and die a maid.

Nurse. Well, this once I'll venture you; but if you disparage me——

Hoyd. Never fear, I'll show him my parts, I'll warrant him.—[*Exit Nurse.*] These old women are so wise when they get a poor girl in their clutches! but ere it be long, I shall know what's what, as well as the best of 'em.

Enter Young Fashion.

Fash. Your servant, madam; I'm glad to find you alone, for I have something of importance to speak to you about.

Hoyd. Sir (my lord, I meant), you may speak to me about what you please, I shall give you a civil answer.

Fash. You give me so obliging a one, it encourages me to tell you in few words what I think both for your interest and mine. Your father, I suppose you know, has resolved to make me happy in being

your husband, and I hope I may depend upon your consent, to perform what he desires.

Hoyd. Sir, I never disobey my father in anything but eating of green gooseberries.

Fash. So good a daughter must needs make an admirable wife; I am therefore impatient till you are mine, and hope you will so far consider the violence of my love, that you won't have the cruelty to defer my happiness so long as your father designs it.

Hoyd. Pray, my lord, how long is that?

Fash. Madam, a thousand year—a whole week.

Hoyd. A week!—Why, I shall be an old woman by that time.

Fash. And I an old man, which you'll find a greater misfortune than t'other.

Hoyd. Why, I thought 'twas to be to-morrow morning, as soon as I was up; I'm sure nurse told me so.

Fash. And it shall be to-morrow morning still, if you'll consent.

Hoyd. If I'll consent! Why, I thought I was to obey you as my husband.

Fash. That's when we are married; till then, I am to obey you.

Hoyd. Why then, if we are to take it by turns, it's the same thing. I'll obey you now; and when we are married, you shall obey me.

Fash. With all my heart; but I doubt we must get nurse on our side, or we shall hardly prevail with the chaplain.

Hoyd. No more we shan't indeed, for he loves her better than he loves his pulpit, and would always be a preaching to her by his good will.

Fash. Why then, my dear little bedfellow, if you'll call her hither, we'll try to persuade her presently.

Hoyd. O Lord, I can tell you a way how to persuade her to anything.

Fash. How's that?

Hoyd. Why, tell her she's a wholesome comely woman—and give her half-a-crown.

Fash. Nay, if that will do, she shall have half a score of 'em.

Hoyd. O gemini! for half that, she'd marry you herself. I'll run and call her.

[*Exit.*

Fash. So, matters go swimmingly. This is a rare girl, i' faith; I shall have a fine time on't with her in London. I'm much mistaken if she don't prove a March hare all the year round. What a scampering chase will she make on't, when she finds the whole kennel of beaux at her tail! Hey to the park, and the play, and the church, and the devil; she'll show 'em sport, I'll warrant 'em. But no matter, she brings an estate will afford me a separate maintenance.

Enter Miss Hoyden *and Nurse.*

How do you do, good mistress nurse? I desired your young lady would give me leave to see you, that I might thank you for your extraordinary care and conduct in her education; pray accept of this small acknowledgment for it at present, and depend upon my farther kindness, when I shall be that happy thing her husband.

Nurse [*aside*]. Gold, by makings!—[*Aloud*] Your honor's goodness is too great; alas! all I can boast of is, I gave her pure good milk, and so your honor would have said, an you had seen how the poor thing sucked it.—Eh, God's blessing on the sweet face on't! how it used to hang at this poor teat, and suck and squeeze, and kick and sprawl it would, till the belly on't was so full, it would drop off like a leech.

Hoyd. [*aside to Nurse angrily*]. Pray one word with you. Prithee nurse, don't stand ripping up old stories, to make one ashamed before one's love. Do you think such a fine proper gentleman as he cares for a fiddle-come tale of a draggle-tailed girl? If you have a mind to make him have a good opinion of a woman, don't tell him what one did then, tell him what one can do now.—[*To* Young Fashion] I hope your honor will excuse my mismanners to whisper before you; it was only to give some orders about the family.

Fash. O everything, madam, is to give way to business! Besides, good housewifery is a very commendable quality in a young lady.

Hoyd. Pray, sir, are the young ladies good housewives at London town? Do they darn their own linen?

Fash. O no, they study how to spend money, not to save it.

Hoyd. Ecod, I don't know but that may be better sport than t'other; ha, nurse?

Fash. Well, you shall have your choice when you come there.

Hoyd. Shall I?—then by my troth I'll get there as fast as I can.—[*To Nurse*] His honor desires you'll be so kind as to let us be married to-morrow.

Nurse. To-morrow, my dear madam?

Fash. Yes, to-morrow, sweet nurse, privately; young folks, you know, are impatient, and Sir Tunbelly would make us stay a week for a wedding dinner. Now all things being signed and sealed and agreed, I fancy there could be no great harm in practising a scene or two of matrimony in private, if it were only to give us the better assurance when we come to play it in public.

Nurse. Nay, I must confess stolen pleasures are sweet; but if you should be married now, what will you do when Sir Tunbelly calls for you to be wed?

Hoyd. Why then we'll be married again.

Nurse. What, twice, my child?

Hoyd. Ecod, I don't care how often I'm married, not I.

Fash. Pray, nurse, don't you be against your young lady's good, for by this means she'll have the pleasure of two wedding-days.

Hoyd. [*to Nurse softly*]. And of two wedding-nights, too, nurse.

Nurse. Well, I'm such a tender-hearted fool, I find I can refuse nothing; so you shall e'en follow your own inventions.

Hoyd. Shall I?—[*Aside*] O Lord, I could leap over the moon!

Fash. Dear nurse, this goodness of yours shan't go unrewarded; but now you must employ your power with Mr. Bull the chaplain, that he may do us his friendly office too, and then we shall all be happy. Do you think you can prevail with him?

Nurse. Prevail with him!—or he shall never prevail with me, I can tell him that.

Hoyd. My lord, she has had him upon the hip this seven year.

Fash. I'm glad to hear it; however, to strengthen your interest with him, you may let him know I have several fat livings in my gift, and that the first that falls shall be in your disposal.

Nurse. Nay, than I'll make him marry more folks than one, I'll promise him.

Hoyd. Faith do, nurse, make him marry you too, I'm sure he'll do't for a fat living: for he loves eating more than he loves his Bible; and I have often heard him say, a fat living was the best meat in the world.

Nurse. Ay, and I'll make him commend the sauce, too, or I'll bring his gown to a cassock I will so.

Fash. Well, nurse, whilst you go and settle matters with him, then your lady and I will go take a walk in the garden.

Nurse. I'll do your honor's business in the catching up of a garter. [*Exit.*

Fash. [*giving her his hand*]. Come, madam, dare you venture yourself alone with me?

Hoyd. O dear, yes, sir, I don't think you'll do anything to me I need be afraid on.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Loveless's *Lodgings.*

Enter Amanda *and* Berinthia.

A SONG

I

I smile at Love and all its arts,
  The charming Cynthia cried:
Take heed, for Love has piercing darts,
  A wounded swain replied.
Once free and blest as you are now,
  I trifled with his charms,
I pointed at his little bow,
  And sported with his arms:
Till urged too far, Revenge! he cries,
  A fatal shaft he drew,
It took its passage through your eyes,
  And to my heart it flew.

II

To tear it thence I tried in vain,
  To strive, I quickly found,
Was only to increase the pain,
  And to enlarge the wound.
Ah! much too well, I fear, you know
  What pain I'm to endure,
Since what your eyes alone could do,
  Your heart alone can cure.
And that (grant heaven I may mistake!)
  I doubt is doomed to bear
A burden for another's sake,
  Who ill rewards its care.

Aman. Well, now, Berinthia, I'm at leisure to hear what 'twas you had to say to me.

Ber. What I had to say was only to echo the sighs and groans of a dying lover.

Aman. Phu! will you never learn to talk in earnest of anything?

Ber. Why this shall be in earnest, if you please. For my part, I only tell you matter of fact, you may take it which way you like best; but if you'll follow the women of the town, you'll take it both ways; for when a man offers himself to one of them, first she takes him in jest, and then she takes him in earnest.

Aman. I'm sure there's so much jest and earnest in what you say to me, I scarce know how to take it; but I think you have bewitched me, for I don't find it possible to be angry with you, say what you will.

Ber. I'm very glad to hear it, for I have no mind to quarrel with you, for more reasons than I'll brag of; but quarrel or not, smile or frown, I must tell you what I have suffered upon your account.

Aman. Upon my account!

Ber. Yes, upon yours; I have been forced to sit still and hear you commended for two hours together, without one compliment to myself; now don't you think a woman had a blessed time of that?

Aman. Alas! I should have been unconcerned at it; I never knew where the pleasure lay of being praised by the men. But pray who was this that commended me so?

Ber. One you have a mortal aversion to, Mr. Worthy; he used you like a text, he took you all to pieces, but spoke so learnedly upon every point, one might see the spirit of the church was in him. If you are a woman, you'd have been in an ecstasy to have heard how feelingly he handled your hair, your

eyes, your nose, your mouth, your teeth, your tongue, your chin, your neck, and so forth. Thus he preached for an hour, but when he came to use an application, he observed that all these without a gallant were nothing.—Now consider of what has been said, and heaven give you grace to put it in practice.

Aman. Alas! Berinthia, did I incline to a gallant (which you know I do not), do you think a man so nice as he could have the least concern for such a plain unpolished thing as I am? It is impossible!

Ber. Now have you a great mind to put me upon commending you.

Aman. Indeed that was not my design.

Ber. Nay, if it were, it's all one, for I won't do't, I'll leave that to your looking-glass. But to show you I have some good nature left, I'll commend him, and may be that may do as well.

Aman. You have a great mind to persuade me I am in love with him.

Ber. I have a great mind to persuade you, you don't know what you are in love with.

Aman. I am sure I am not in love with him, nor never shall be, so let that pass. But you were saying something you would commend him for.

Ber. Oh! you'd be glad to hear a good character of him, however.

Aman. Psha!

Ber. Psha!—Well, 'tis a foolish undertaking for women in these kind of matters to pretend to deceive one another.—Have not I been bred a woman as well as you?

Aman. What then?

Ber. Why, then I understand my trade so well, that whenever I am told of a man I like, I cry, Psha! But that I may spare you the pains of putting me a second time in mind to commend him, I'll proceed, and give you this account of him. That though 'tis possible he may have had women with as good faces as your ladyship's, (no discredit to it neither), yet you must know your cautious behavior, with that reserve in your humor, has given him his death's wound; he mortally hates a coquette. He says 'tis impossible to love where we cannot esteem; and that no woman can be esteemed by a man who has sense, if she makes herself cheap in the eye of a fool; that pride to a woman is as necessary as humility to a divine; and that far-fetched and dear-bought, is meat for gentlemen as well as for ladies;—in short, that every woman who has beauty may set a price upon herself, and that by under-selling the market, they ruin the trade. This is his doctrine, how do you like it?

Aman. So well, that since I never intend to have a gallant for myself, if I were to recommend one to a friend, he should be the man.

Enter Worthy.

Bless me! he's here, pray heaven he did not hear me.

Ber. If he did, it won't hurt your reputation; your thoughts are as safe in his heart as in your own.

Wor. I venture in at an unseasonable time of night, ladies; I hope, if I'm troublesome, you'll use the same freedom in turning me out again.

Aman. I believe it can't be late, for Mr. Loveless is not come home yet, and he usually keeps good hours.

Wor. Madam, I'm afraid he'll transgress a little to-night; for he told me about half an hour ago, he was going to sup with some company he doubted would keep him out till three or four o'clock in the morning, and desired I would let my servant acquaint you with it, that you might not expect him: but my fellow's a blunderhead; so lest he should make some mistake, I thought it my duty to deliver the message myself.

Aman. I'm very sorry he should give you that trouble, sir: but——

Ber. But since he has, will you give me leave, madam, to keep him to play at ombre with us?

Aman. Cousin, you know you command my house.

Wor. [*to* Berinthia]. And, madam, you know you command me, though I'm a very wretched gamester.

Ber. Oh! you play well enough to lose your money, and that's all the ladies require; so without any more ceremony, let us go into the next room and call for the cards.

Aman. With all my heart.

[*Exit* Worthy, *leaving* Amanda.

Ber. Well, how this business will end heaven knows; but she seems to me to be in as fair a way—as a boy is to be a rogue, when he's put clerk to an attorney. [*Exit.*

Scene III

Berinthia's *Chamber.*

Enter Loveless *cautiously in the dark.*

Love. So, thus far all's well. I'm got into her bed-chamber, and I think nobody has perceived me steal into the house; my wife don't expect me home till four o'clock; so, if Berinthia comes to bed by eleven, I shall have a chase of five hours. Let me see, where shall I hide myself? Under her bed? No; we shall have her maid searching there for something or other; her closet's a better place, and I have a master-key will open it. I'll e'en in there, and attack her just when she comes to her prayers; that's the most

likely to prove her critical minute, for then the devil will be there to assist me.

[*Retires into the closet, shutting the door after him.*

Enter Berinthia, *with a candle in her hand.*

Ber. Well, sure I am the best-natured woman in the world, I that love cards so well (there is but one thing upon earth I love better), have pretended letters to write, to give my friends a *tête-à-tête*. However, I'm innocent, for picquet is the game I set 'em to; at her own peril be it, if she ventures to play with him at any other. But now what shall I do with myself? I don't know how in the world to pass my time; would Loveless were here to *badiner* a little! Well, he's a charming fellow; I don't wonder his wife's so fond of him. What if I should sit down and think of him till I fall asleep, and dream of the Lord knows what? Oh, but then if I should dream we were married, I should be frightened out of my wits!—[*Seeing a book*] What's this book? I think I had best go read. O splenetic! it's a sermon. Well, I'll go into my closet, and read the *Plotting Sisters*.—[*She opens the closet, sees* Loveless, *and shrieks out*] O Lord, a ghost! a ghost! a ghost! a ghost!

Enter Loveless, *running to her.*

Love. Peace, my dear, it's no ghost; take it in your arms, you'll find 'tis worth a hundred of 'em.

Ber. Run in again; here's somebody coming. [Loveless *retires as before.*

Enter Maid.

Maid. O Lord, madam! what's the matter?

Ber. O Heavens! I'm almost frightened out of my wits; I thought verily I had seen a ghost, and 'twas nothing but the white curtain, with a black hood pinned up against it: you may begone again; I am the fearfullest fool! [*Exit Maid.*

Re-enter Loveless.

Love. Is the coast clear?

Ber. The coast clear! I suppose you are clear, you'd never play such a trick as this else.

Love. I'm very well pleased with my trick thus far, and shall be so till I have played it out, if it ben't your fault. Where's my wife?

Ber. At cards.

Love. With whom?

Ber. With Worthy.

Love. Then we are safe enough.

Ber. Are you so? Some husbands would be of another mind, if he were at cards with their wives.

Love. And they'd be in the right on't, too: but I dare trust mine.—Besides, I know he's in love in another place, and he's not one of those who court half-a-dozen at a time.

Ber. Nay, the truth on't is, you'd pity him if you saw how uneasy he is at being engaged with us; but 'twas my malice, I fancied he was to meet his mistress somewhere else, so did it to have the pleasure of seeing him fret.

Love. What says Amanda to my staying abroad so late?

Ber. Why, she's as much out of humor as he; I believe they wish one another at the devil.

Love. Then I'm afraid they'll quarrel at play, and soon throw up the cards.—[*Offering to pull her into the closet*] Therefore, my dear, charming angel, let us make a good use of our time.

Ber. Heavens! what do you mean?

Love. Pray what do you think I mean?

Ber. I don't know.

Love. I'll show you.

Ber. You may as well tell me.

Love. No, that would make you blush worse than t'other.

Ber. Why, do you intend to make me blush?

Love. Faith I can't tell that; but if I do, it shall be in the dark. [*Pulling her.*

Ber. O heavens! I would not be in the dark with you for all the world.

Love. I'll try that. [*Puts out the candle.*

Ber. O Lord! are you mad? What shall I do for light?

Love. You'll do as well without it.

Ber. Why, one can't find a chair to sit down.

Love. Come into the closet, madam, there's moonshine upon the couch.

Ber. Nay, never pull, for I will not go.

Love. Then you must be carried.

[*Takes her in his arms.*

Ber. [*very softly*]. Help! help! I'm ravished! ruined! undone! O Lord, I shall never be able to bear it.

[*Exit* Loveless *carrying* Berinthia.

Scene IV

Sir Tunbelly's *House.*

Enter Miss Hoyden, *Nurse*, Young Fashion, *and* Bull.

Fash. This quick dispatch of yours, Mr. Bull, I take so kindly, it shall give you a claim to my favor as long as I live, I do assure you.

Hoyd. And to mine, too, I promise you.

Bull. I most humbly thank your honors; and I hope, since it has been my lot to join you in the holy bands of wedlock, you will so well cultivate the soil, which I have craved a blessing on, that your children may swarm about you like bees about a honeycomb.

Hoyd. Ecod, with all my heart; the more the merrier, I say; ha, nurse?

Enter LORY; *he takes his master hastily aside.*

Lory. One word with you, for heaven's sake!

Fash. What the devil's the matter?

Lory. Sir, your fortune's ruined; and I don't think your life's worth a quarter of an hour's purchase. Yonder's your brother arrived with two coaches and six horses, twenty footmen and pages, a coat worth four-score pound, and periwig down to his knees: so judge what will become of your lady's heart.

Fash. Death and furies! 'tis impossible!

Lory. Fiends and specters! sir, 'tis true.

Fash. Is he in the house yet?

Lory. No, they are capitulating with him at the gate. The porter tells him he's come to run away with Miss Hoyden, and has cocked the blunderbuss at him; your brother swears Gad damme, they are a parcel of clawns, and he has a good mind to break off the match; but they have given the word for Sir Tunbelly, so I doubt all will come out presently. Pray, sir, resolve what you'll do this moment, for egad they'll maul you.

Fash. Stay a little.—[*To* MISS HOYDEN] My dear, here's a troublesome business my man tells me of, but don't be frightened, we shall be too hard for the rogue. Here's an impudent fellow at the gate (not knowing I was come hither *incognito*) has taken my name upon him, in hopes to run away with you.

Hoyd. O the brazen-faced varlet, it's well we are married, or maybe we might never a been so.

Fash. [*aside*]. Egad, like enough!—[*Aloud*] Prithee, dear doctor, run to Sir Tunbelly, and stop him from going to the gate before I speak with him.

Bull. I fly, my good lord. [*Exit.*

Nurse. An't please your honor, my lady and I had best lock ourselves up till the danger be over.

Fash. Ay, by all means.

Hoyd. Not so fast, I won't be locked up any more. I'm married.

Fash. Yes, pray, my dear, do, till we have seized this rascal.

Hoyd. Nay, if you pray me, I'll do anything. [*Exeunt* MISS HOYDEN *and Nurse.*

Fash. Oh! here's Sir Tunbelly coming.—Hark you, sirrah, things are better than you imagine; the wedding's over.

Lory. The devil it is, sir!

Fash. Not a word, all's safe; but Sir Tunbelly don't know it, nor must not yet; so I am resolved to brazen the business out, and have the pleasure of turning the impostor upon his lordship, which I believe may easily be done.

Enter SIR TUNBELLY, BULL, *and Servants, armed.*

Fash. Did you ever hear, sir, of so impudent an undertaking!

Sir Tun. Never, by the mass! But we'll tickle him, I'll warrant him.

Fash. They tell me, sir, he has a great many people with him disguised like servants.

Sir Tun. Ay, ay, rogues enough; but I'll soon raise the posse upon 'em.

Fash. Sir, if you'll take my advice, we'll go a shorter way to work. I find whoever this spark is, he knows nothing of my being privately here; so if you pretend to receive him civilly, he'll enter without suspicion; and as soon as he is within the gate, we'll whip up the drawbridge upon his back, let fly the blunderbuss to disperse his crew, and so commit him to jail.

Sir Tun. Egad, your lordship is an ingenious person, and a very great general; but shall we kill any of 'em or not?

Fash. No, no; fire over their heads only to fright 'em; I'll warrant the regiment scours when the colonel's a prisoner.

Sir Tun. Then come along, my boys, and let your courage be great—for your danger is but small. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

The Gate.

Enter LORD FOPPINGTON, *with* LA VEROLE *and Servants.*

Lord Fop. A pax of these bumpkinly people! Will they open the gate, or do they desire I should grow at their moat-side like a willow?—[*To the Porter*] Hey, fellow—prithee do me the favor, in as few words as thou canst find to express thyself, to tell me whether thy master will admit me or not, that I may turn about my coach, and be gone.

Porter. Here's my master himself now at hand, he's of age, he'll give you his answer.

Enter SIR TUNBELLY *and Servants.*

Sir Tun. My most noble lord, I crave your pardon for making your honor wait so long; but my orders to my servants have been to admit nobody without my knowledge, for fear of some attempt upon my daughter, the times being full of plots and roguery.

Lord Fop. Much caution, I must confess, is a sign of great wisdom: but, stap my vitals, I have got a cold enough to destroy a porter!—He, hem——

Sir Tun. I am very sorry for't, indeed, my lord; but if your lordship please to walk in, we'll help you to some brown sugar-candy. My lord, I'll show you the way.

Lord Fop. Sir, I follow you with pleasure. [*Exit with* Sir Tunbelly Clumsey. *As* La Verole *and the rest are about to follow him in, the Servants within clap the door against* La Verole.

Serv. [*within*]. Nay, hold you me there, sir.

La Ver. Jernie die, qu'est-ce que veut dire ça?

Sir Tun. [*within*]. Fire, porter.

Porter [*fires*]. Have among ye, my masters.

La Ver. Ah, je suis mort!—

[*Runs off with the rest.*

Porter. Not one soldier left, by the mass!

Scene VI

Scene changes to the Hall.

Enter Sir Tunbelly, Bull, *and Servants, with* Lord Foppington, *disarmed.*

Sir Tun. Come, bring him along, bring him along!

Lord Fop. What the pax do you mean, gentlemen! Is it fair-time, that you are all drunk before dinner?

Sir Tun. Drunk, sirrah!—Here's an impudent rogue for you! Drunk or sober, bully, I'm a justice of the peace, and know how to deal with strollers.

Lord Fop. Strollers!

Sir Tun. Ay, strollers. Come, give an account of yourself; what's your name, where do you live? do you pay scot and lot? are you a Williamite, or a Jacobite? Come.

Lord Fop. And why dost thou ask me so many impertinent questions?

Sir Tun. Because I'll make you answer 'em before I have done with you, you rascal you!

Lord Fop. Before Gad, all the answer I can make thee to 'em is, that thou art a very extraordinary old fellow, stap my vitals!

Sir Tun. Nay, if you are for joking with deputy lieutenants, we'st know how to deal with you. Here, draw a warrant for him immediately.

Lord Fop. A warrant! What the devil is't thou wouldst be at, old gentleman?

Sir Tun. I would be at you, sirrah (if my hands were not tied as a magistrate), and with these two double fists beat your teeth down your throat, you dog you!

Lord Fop. And why wouldst thou spoil my face at that rate?

Sir Tun. For your design to rob me of my daughter, villain.

Lord Fop. Rab thee of thy daughter!—Now do I begin to believe I am a-bed and asleep, and that all this is but a dream.—If it be, 'twill be an agreeable surprise enough to waken by and by; and instead of the impertinent company of a nasty country justice, find myself perhaps in the arms of a woman of quality.—[*To* Sir Tunbelly] Prithee, old father, wilt thou give me leave to ask thee one question?

Sir Tun. I can't tell whether I will or not, till I know what it is.

Lord Fop. Why, then it is, whether thou didst not write to my Lord Foppington to come down and marry thy daughter?

Sir Tun. Yes, marry did I; and my Lord Foppington is come down, and shall marry my daughter before she's a day older.

Lord Fop. Now give me thy hand, dear dad; I thought we should understand one another at last.

Sir Tun. This fellow's mad.—Here bind him hand and foot. [*They bind him down.*

Lord Fop. Nay, prithee, knight, leave fooling; thy jest begins to grow dull.

Sir Tun. Bind him, I say, he's mad.—Bread and water, a dark room, and a whip may bring him to his senses again.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. Egad! if I don't waken quickly, by all I can see, this is like to prove one of the most impertinent dreams that ever I dreamt in my life.

Enter Miss Hoyden *and Nurse.*

Hoyd. [*going up to him*]. Is this he that would have run away with me? Fo! how he stinks of sweets!—Pray, father, let him be dragged through the horse-pond.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. This must be my wife by her natural inclination to her husband.

Hoyd. Pray, father, what do you intend to do with him, hang him?

Sir Tun. That at least, child.

Nurse. Ay, and it's e'en too good for him, too.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. *Madame la gouvernante,* I presume. Hitherto this appears to me to be one of the most extraordinary families that ever man of quality matched into.

Sir Tun. What's become of my lord, daughter?

Hoyd. He's just coming, sir.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. My lord! what does he mean by that now?

Enter Young Fashion *and* Lory.

[*Seeing him*] Stap my vitals, Tam! now the dream's out.

Fash. Is this the fellow, sir, that designed to trick me of your daughter?

Sir Tun. This is he, my lord; how do you like him? Is not he a pretty fellow to get a fortune?

Fash. I find by his dress he thought your daughter might be taken with a beau.

Hoyd. O gemini! Is this a beau? let me see him again.—Ha! I find a beau's not such an ugly thing neither.

Fash. [*aside*]. Egad, she'll be in love with him presently; I'll e'en have him sent away

to jail.—[*To* Lord Foppington] Sir, though your undertaking shows you are a person of no extraordinary modesty, I suppose you han't confidence enough to expect much favor from me?

Lord Fop. Strike me dumb, Tam, thou art a very impudent fellow!

Nurse. Look, if the varlet has not the 'frontery to call his lordship plain Thomas!

Bull. The business is, he would feign himself mad, to avoid going to jail.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. That must be the chaplain, by his unfolding of mysteries.

Sir Tun. Come, is the warrant writ?

Clerk. Yes, sir.

Sir Tun. Give me the pen, I'll sign it.—So now, constable, away with him.

Lord Fop. Hold one moment,—pray, gentlemen. My Lord Foppington, shall I beg one word with your lordship?

Nurse. O ho, it's my lord with him now! See how afflictions will humble folks.

Hoyd. Pray, my lord, don't let him whisper too close, lest he bite your ear off.

Lord Fop. I am not altogether so hungry as your ladyship is pleased to imagine.—[*Aside to* Young Fashion] Look you, Tam, I am sensible I have not been so kind to you as I ought, but I hope you'll forget what's passed, and accept of the five thousand pounds I offer; thou mayst live in extreme splendor with it, stap my vitals!

Fash. It's a much easier matter to prevent a disease than to cure it; a quarter of that sum would have secured your mistress; twice as much won't redeem her.

[*Leaving him.*

Sir Tun. Well, what says he?

Fash. Only the rascal offered me a bribe to let him go.

Sir Tun. Ay, he shall go, with a pox to him!—Lead on, constable.

Lord Fop. One more word, and I have done.

Sir Tun. Before Gad! thou art an impudent fellow, to trouble the court at this rate after thou art condemned; but speak once for all.

Lord Fop. Why then, once for all; I have at last luckily called to mind that there is a gentleman of this country, who I believe cannot live far from this place, if he were here, would satisfy you, I am Navelty, Baron of Foppington, with five thousand pounds a year, and that fellow there, a rascal not worth a groat.

Sir Tun. Very well; now, who is this honest gentleman you are so well acquainted with?—[*To* Young Fashion] Come, sir, we shall hamper him.

Lord Fop. 'Tis Sir John Friendly.

Sir Tun. So; he lives within half a mile, and came down into the country but last night; this bold-faced fellow thought he had been at London still, and so quoted him; now we shall display him in his colors: I'll send for Sir John immediately.—[*To a Servant*] Here, fellow, away presently, and desire my neighbor he'll do me the favor to step over, upon an extraordinary occasion.—And in the meanwhile you had best secure this sharper in the gate-house. [*Exit Servant.*

Constable. An't please your worship, he may chance to give us the slip thence. If I were worthy to advise, I think the dog-kennel's a surer place.

Sir Tun. With all my heart; anywhere.

Lord Fop. Nay, for heaven's sake, sir! do me the favor to put me in a clean room, that I mayn't daub my clothes.

Sir Tun. O, when you have married my daughter, her estate will afford you new ones.—Away with him!

Lord Fop. A dirty country justice is a barbarous magistrate, stap my vitals!

[*Exit Constable with* Lord Foppington.

Fash. [*aside*]. Egad, I must prevent this knight's coming, or the house will grow soon too hot to hold me.—[*To* Sir Tunbelly] Sir, I fancy 'tis not worth while to trouble Sir John upon this impertinent fellow's desire: I'll send and call the messenger back.

Sir Tun. Nay, with all my heart; for, to be sure, he thought he was far enough off, or the rogue would never have named him.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, I met Sir John just lighting at the gate; he's come to wait upon you.

Sir Tun. Nay, then, it happens as one could wish.

Fash. [*aside*]. The devil it does!—Lory, you see how things are, here will be a discovery presently, and we shall have our brains beat out; for my brother will be sure to swear he don't know me: therefore, run into the stable, take the two first horses you can light on, I'll slip out at the back door, and we'll away immediately.

Lory. What, and leave your lady, sir?

Fash. There's no danger in that as long as I have taken possession; I shall know how to treat with 'em well enough, if once I am out of their reach. Away! I'll steal after thee.

[*Exit* Lory; *his master follows him out at one door, as* Sir John Friendly *enters at t'other.*

Enter Sir John.

Sir Tun. Sir John, you are the welcomest man alive; I had just sent a messenger to desire you'd step over, upon a very extraordinary occasion. We are all in arms here.

Sir John. How so?

Sir Tun. Why, you must know, a finical sort of a tawdry fellow here (I don't know who the devil he is, not I) hearing, I sup-

pose, that the match was concluded between my Lord Foppington and my girl Hoyden, comes impudently to the gate, with a whole pack of rogues in liveries, and would have passed upon me for his lordship; but what does I? I comes up to him boldly at the head of his guards, takes him by the throat, strikes up his heels, binds him hand and foot, dispatches a warrant, and commits him prisoner to the dog-kennel.

Sir John. So; but how do you know but this was my lord? For I was told he set out from London the day before me, with a very fine retinue, and intended to come directly hither.

Sir Tun. Why, now to show you how many lies people raise in that damned town, he came two nights ago post, with only one servant, and is now in the house with me. But you don't know the cream of the jest yet; this same rogue (that lies yonder neck and heels among the hounds), thinking you were out of the country, quotes you for his acquaintance, and said if you were here, you'd justify him to be Lord Foppington, and I know not what.

Sir John. Pray will you let me see him?

Sir Tun. Ay, that you shall presently.—Here, fetch the prisoner. [*Exit Servant.*

Sir John. I wish there ben't some mistake in the business.—Where's my lord? I know him very well.

Sir Tun. He was here just now.—[*To* Bull] See for him, doctor; tell him Sir John is here to wait upon him. [*Exit* Bull.

Sir John. I hope, Sir Tunbelly, the young lady is not married yet.

Sir Tun. No, things won't be ready this week. But why do you say you hope she is not married?

Sir John. Some foolish fancies only, perhaps I'm mistaken.

Re-enter Bull.

Bull. Sir, his lordship is just rid out to take the air.

Sir Tun. To take the air! Is that his London breeding, to go take the air when gentlemen come to visit him?

Sir John. 'Tis possible he might want it, he might not be well, some sudden qualm perhaps.

Re-enter Constable, etc., with Lord Foppington.

Lord Fop. Stap my vitals, I'll have satisfaction!

Sir John [*running to him*]. My dear Lord Foppington!

Lord Fop. Dear Friendly, thou art come in the critical minute, strike me dumb!

Sir John. Why, I little thought I should have found you in fetters.

Lord Fop. Why, truly the world must do me the justice to confess, I do use to appear a little more *dégagé;* but this old gentleman, not liking the freedom of my air, has been pleased to skewer down my arms like a rabbit.

Sir Tun. Is it then possible that this should be the true Lord Foppington at last?

Lord Fop. Why, what do you see in his face to make you doubt of it? Sir, without presuming to have any extraordinary opinion of my figure, give me leave to tell you, if you had seen as many lords as I have done, you would not think it impossible a person of a worse *taille* than mine might be a modern man of quality.

Sir Tun. Unbind him, slaves!—My lord, I'm struck dumb, I can only beg pardon by signs; but if a sacrifice will appease you, you shall have it.—Here pursue this Tartar, bring him back.—Away, I say!—A dog! Oons, I'll cut off his ears and his tail, I'll draw out all his teeth, pull his skin over his head—and—and what shall I do more?

Sir John. He does indeed deserve to be made an example of.

Lord Fop. He does deserve to be *chartre,* stap my vitals!

Sir Tun. May I then hope to have your honor's pardon?

Lord Fop. Sir, we courtiers do nothing without a bribe: that fair young lady might do miracles.

Sir Tun. Hoyden! come hither, Hoyden.

Lord Fop. Hoyden is her name, sir?

Sir Tun. Yes, my lord.

Lord Fop. The prettiest name for a song I ever heard.

Sir Tun. My lord—here's my girl; she's yours, she has a wholesome body, and a virtuous mind; she's a woman complete, both in flesh and in spirit; she has a bag of milled crowns, as scarce as they are, and fifteen hundred a year stitched fast to her tail: so, go thy ways, Hoyden.

Lord Fop. Sir, I do receive her like a gentleman.

Sir Tun. Then I'm a happy man. I bless Heaven, and if your lordship will give me leave, I will, like a good Christian at Christmas, be very drunk by way of thanksgiving. Come, my noble peer, I believe dinner's ready; if your honor pleases to follow me, I'll lead you on to the attack of a venison-pasty. [*Exit.*

Lord Fop. Sir, I wait upon you.—Will your ladyship do me the favor of your little finger, madam?

Hoyd. My lord, I'll follow you presently, I have a little business with my nurse.

Lord Fop. Your ladyship's most humble servant.—Come, Sir John; the ladies have *des affaires.* [*Exit with* Sir John Friendly.

Hoyd. So, nurse, we are finely brought to bed! what shall we do now?

Nurse. Ah, dear miss, we are all undone! Mr. Bull, you were used to help a woman to a remedy. [*Crying.*

Bull. Alack-a-day! but it's past my skill now, I can do nothing.

Nurse. Who would have thought that ever your invention should have been drained so dry?

Hoyd. Well, I have often thought old folks fools, and now I'm sure they are so; I have found a way myself to secure us all.

Nurse. Dear lady, what's that?

Hoyd. Why, if you two will be sure to hold your tongues, and not say a word of what's past, I'll e'en marry this lord, too.

Nurse. What! two husbands, my dear?

Hoyd. Why, you have had three, good nurse, you may hold your tongue.

Nurse. Ay, but not altogether, sweet child.

Hoyd. Psha! if you had, you'd ne'er a thought much on't.

Nurse. Oh, but 'tis a sin, sweeting!

Bull. Nay, that's my business to speak to, nurse.—I do confess, to take two husbands for the satisfaction of the flesh, is to commit the sin of exorbitancy; but to do it for the peace of the spirit, is no more than to be drunk by way of physic. Besides, to prevent a parent's wrath, is to avoid the sin of disobedience; for when the parent's angry, the child is froward. So that upon the whole matter, I do think, though miss should marry again, she may be saved.

Hoyd. Ecod, and I will marry again then! and so there's an end of the story.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I

London—YOUNG FASHION'S *Lodgings.*

Enter COUPLER, YOUNG FASHION, *and* LORY.

Coup. Well, and so Sir John coming in——

Fash. And so Sir John coming in, I thought it might be manners in me to go out, which I did, and getting on horseback as fast as I could, rid away as if the devil had been at the rear of me. What has happened since, heaven knows.

Coup. Egad, sirrah, I know as well as heaven.

Fash. What do you know?

Coup. That you are a cuckold.

Fash. The devil I am! By who?

Coup. By your brother.

Fash. My brother! which way?

Coup. The old way; he has lain with your wife.

Fash. Hell and furies! what dost thou mean?

Coup. I mean plainly; I speak no parable.

Fash. Plainly! thou dost not speak common sense, I cannot understand one word thou sayest.

Coup. You will do soon, youngster. In short, you left your wife a widow, and she married again.

Fash. It's a lie.

Coup. Ecod, if I were a young fellow, I'd break your head, sirrah.

Fash. Dear dad, don't be angry, for I'm as mad as Tom of Bedlam.

Coup. When I had fitted you with a wife, you should have kept her.

Fash. But is it possible the young strumpet could play me such a trick?

Coup. A young strumpet, sir, can play twenty tricks.

Fash. But prithee instruct me a little farther; whence comes thy intelligence?

Coup. From your brother, in this letter; there, you may read it.

Fash. [*reads*].

Dear Coupler,—[*Pulling off his hat.*] I have only time to tell thee in three lines, or thereabouts, that there has been the devil. That rascal Tam, having stole the letter thou hadst formerly writ for me to bring to Sir Tunbelly, formed a damnable design upon my mistress, and was in a fair way of success when I arrived. But after having suffered some indignities (in which I have all daubed my embroidered coat), I put him to flight. I sent out a party of horse after him, in hopes to have made him my prisoner, which if I had done, I would have qualified him for the seraglio, stap my vitals!

The danger I have thus narrowly 'scaped has made me fortify myself against farther attempts, by entering immediately into an association with the young lady, by which we engage to stand by one another as long as we both shall live.

In short, the papers are sealed, and the contract is signed, so the business of the lawyer is *achevé;* but I defer the divine part of the thing till I arrive at London, not being willing to consummate in any other bed but my own.

Postscript.

'Tis possible I may be in tawn as soon as this letter, far I find this lady is so violently in love with me, I have determined to make her happy with all the dispatch that is practicable, without disardering my coach-harses.

So, here's rare work, i'faith!

Lory. Egad, Miss Hoyden has laid about her bravely!

Coup. I think my country-girl has played her part as well as if she had been born and bred in St. James's parish.

Fash. That rogue the chaplain!

Lory. And then that jade the nurse, sir!

Fash. And then that drunken sot Lory,

sir! that could not keep himself sober to be a witness to the marriage.

Lory. Sir—with respect—I know very few drunken sots that do keep themselves sober.

Fash. Hold your prating, sirrah, or I'll break your head!—Dear Coupler, what's to be done?

Coup. Nothing's to be done till the bride and bridegroom come to town.

Fash. Bride and bridegroom! death and furies! I can't bear that thou shouldst call 'em so.

Coup. Why, what shall I call 'em, dog and cat?

Fash. Not for the world, that sounds more like man and wife than t'other.

Coup. Well, if you'll hear of 'em in no language, we'll leave 'em for the nurse and the chaplain.

Fash. The devil and the witch!

Coup. When they come to town——

Lory. We shall have stormy weather.

Coup. Will you hold your tongues, gentlemen, or not?

Lory. Mum!

Coup. I say when they come, we must find what stuff they are made of, whether the churchman be chiefly composed of the flesh, or the spirit; I presume the former. For as chaplains now go, 'tis probable he eats three pound of beef to the reading of one chapter.—This gives him carnal desires, he wants money, preferment, wine, a whore; therefore we must invite him to supper, give him fat capons, sack and sugar, a purse of gold, and a plump sister. Let this be done, and I'll warrant thee, my boy, he speaks truth like an oracle.

Fash. Thou art a profound statesman I allow it; but how shall we gain the nurse?

Coup. Oh! never fear the nurse, if once you have got the priest; for the devil always rides the hag. Well, there's nothing more to be said of the matter at this time, that I know of; so let us go and inquire if there's any news of our people yet, perhaps they may be come. But let me tell you one thing by the way, sirrah, I doubt you have been an idle fellow; if thou hadst behaved thyself as thou shouldst have done, the girl would never have left thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

BERINTHIA'S *Apartment.*

Enter her Maid, passing the stage, followed by WORTHY.

Wor. Hem, Mrs. Abigail, is your mistress to be spoken with?

Abig. By you, sir, I believe she may.

Wor. Why, 'tis by me I would have her spoken with.

Abig. I'll acquaint her, sir. [*Exit.*

Wor. [*solus*]. One lift more I must persuade her to give me, and then I'm mounted. Well, a young bawd and a handsome one for my money; 'tis they do the execution; I'll never go to an old one, but when I have occasion for a witch. Lewdness looks heavenly to a woman, when an angel appears in its cause; but when a hag is advocate, she thinks it comes from the devil. An old woman has something so terrible in her looks, that whilst she is persuading your mistress to forget she has a soul, she stares hell and damnation full in her face.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ber. Well, sir, what news brings you?

Wor. No news, madam; there's a woman going to cuckold her husband.

Ber. Amanda?

Wor. I hope so.

Ber. Speed her well!

Wor. Ay, but there must be more than a God-speed, or your charity won't be worth a farthing.

Ber. Why, han't I done enough already?

Wor. Not quite.

Ber. What's the matter?

Wor. The lady has a scruple still, which you must remove.

Ber. What's that?

Wor. Her virtue—she says.

Ber. And do you believe her?

Wor. No, but I believe it's what she takes for her virtue; it's some relics of lawful love. She is not yet fully satisfied her husband has got another mistress; which unless I can convince her of, I have opened the trenches in vain; for the breach must be wider, before I dare storm the town.

Ber. And so I'm to be your engineer?

Wor. I'm sure you know best how to manage the battery.

Ber. What think you of springing a mine? I have a thought just now come into my head, how to blow her up at once.

Wor. That would be a thought indeed.

Ber. Faith, I'll do't; and thus the execution of it shall be. We are all invited to my Lord Foppington's to-night to supper; he's come to town with his bride, and makes a ball, with an entertainment of music. Now, you must know, my undoer here, Loveless, says he must needs meet me about some private business (I don't know what 'tis) before we go to the company. To which end he has told his wife one lie, and I have told her another. But to make her amends, I'll go immediately, and tell her a solemn truth.

Wor. What's that?

Ber. Why, I'll tell her, that to my certain knowledge her husband has a rendezvous with his mistress this afternoon; and that if she'll give me her word she'll be

satisfied with the discovery, without making any violent inquiry after the woman, I'll direct her to a place where she shall see 'em meet. Now, friend, this I fancy may help you to a critical minute. For home she must go again to dress. You (with your good breeding) come to wait upon us to the ball, find her all alone, her spirit inflamed against her husband for his treason, and her flesh in a heat from some contemplations upon the treachery, her blood on a fire, her conscience in ice; a lover to draw, and the devil to drive.—Ah, poor Amanda!

Wor. [*kneeling*]. Thou angel of light, let me fall down and adore thee!

Ber. Thou minister of darkness, get up again, for I hate to see the devil at his devotions.

Wor. Well, my incomparable Berinthia, how shall I requite you?

Ber. Oh, ne'er trouble yourself about that: virtue is its own reward. There's a pleasure in doing good, which sufficiently pays itself. Adieu!

Wor. Farewell, thou best of women!

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter Amanda *meeting* Berinthia.

Aman. Who was that went from you?

Ber. A friend of yours.

Aman. What does he want?

Ber. Something you might spare him, and be ne'er the poorer.

Aman. I can spare him nothing but my friendship; my love already's all disposed of, though, I confess, to one ungrateful to my bounty.

Ber. Why, there's the mystery! You have been so bountiful, you have cloyed him. Fond wives do by their husbands, as barren wives do by their lapdogs; cram 'em with sweetmeats till they spoil their stomachs.

Aman. Alas! had you but seen how passionately fond he has been since our last reconciliation, you would have thought it were impossible he ever should have breathed an hour without me.

Ber. Ay, but there you thought wrong again, Amanda; you should consider that in matters of love men's eyes are always bigger than their bellies. They have violent appetites, 'tis true, but they have soon dined.

Aman. Well; there's nothing upon earth astonishes me more than men's inconstancy.

Ber. Now there's nothing upon earth astonishes me less, when I consider what they and we are composed of; for nature has made them children, and us babies. Now, Amanda, how we used our babies you may remember. We were mad to have 'em as soon as we saw 'em; kissed 'em to pieces as soon as we got 'em; then pulled off their clothes, saw 'em naked, and so threw 'em away.

Aman. But do you think all men are of this temper?

Ber. All but one.

Aman. Who's that?

Ber. Worthy.

Aman. Why, he's weary of his wife too, you see.

Ber. Ay, that's no proof.

Aman. What can be a greater?

Ber. Being weary of his mistress.

Aman. Don't you think 'twere possible he might give you that, too?

Ber. Perhaps he might, if he were my gallant; not if he were yours.

Aman. Why do you think he should be more constant to me, than he would to you? I'm sure I'm not so handsome.

Ber. Kissing goes by favor; he likes you best.

Aman. Suppose he does. That's no demonstration he would be constant to me.

Ber. No, that I'll grant you: but there are other reasons to expect it. For you must know after all, Amanda, the inconstancy we commonly see in men of brains, does not so much proceed from the uncertainty of their temper, as from the misfortunes of their love. A man sees perhaps a hundred women he likes well enough for an intrigue, and away; but possibly, through the whole course of his life, does not find above one who is exactly what he could wish her; now her, 'tis a thousand to one, he never gets. Either she is not to be had at all (though that seldom happens, you'll say), or he wants those opportunities that are necessary to gain her. Either she likes somebody else much better than him, or uses him like a dog, because he likes nobody so well as her. Still something or other Fate claps in the way between them and the woman they are capable of being fond of; and this makes them wander about from mistress to mistress, like a pilgrim from town to town, who every night must have a fresh lodging, and's in haste to be gone in the morning.

Aman. 'Tis possible there may be something in what you say; but what do you infer from it as to the man we were talking of?

Ber. Why, I infer that you being the woman in the world the most to his humor, 'tis not likely he would quit you for one that is less.

Aman. That is not to be depended upon, for you see Mr. Loveless does so.

Ber. What does Mr. Loveless do?

Aman. Why, he runs after something for variety, I'm sure he does not like so well as he does me.

Ber. That's more than you know, madam.

Aman. No, I'm sure on't. I'm not very vain, Berinthia, and yet I'd lay my life, if I

could look into his heart, he thinks I deserve to be preferred to a thousand of her.

Ber. Don't be too positive in that neither; a million to one but she has the same opinion of you. What would you give to see her?

Aman. Hang her, dirty trull!—Though I really believe she's so ugly she'd cure me of my jealousy.

Ber. All the men of sense about town say she's handsome.

Aman. They are as often out in those things as any people.

Ber. Then I'll give you farther proof—all the women about town say she's a fool. Now I hope you're convinced?

Aman. Whate'er she be, I'm satisfied he does not like her well encugh to bestow anything more than a little outward gallantry upon her.

Ber. Outward gallantry!—[*Aside*] I can't bear this.—[*Aloud*] Don't you think she's a woman to be fobbed off so. Come, I'm too much your friend to suffer you should be thus grossly imposed upon by a man who does not deserve the least part about you, unless he knew how to set a greater value upon it. Therefore, in one word, to my certain knowledge, he is to meet her now, within a quarter of an hour, somewhere about that Babylon of wickedness, Whitehall. And if you'll give me your word that you'll be content with seeing her masked in his hand, without pulling her headclothes off, I'll step immediately to the person from whom I have my intelligence, and send you word whereabouts you may stand to see 'em meet. My friend and I'll watch 'em from another place, and dodge 'em to their private lodging; but don't you offer to follow 'em, lest you do it awkwardly, and spoil all. I'll come home to you again as soon as I have earthed 'em, and give you an account in what corner of the house the scene of their lewdness lies.

Aman. If you can do this, Berinthia, he's a villain.

Ber. I can't help that; men will be so.

Aman. Well, I'll follow your directions, for I shall never rest till I know the worst of this matter.

Ber. Pray, go immediately and get yourself ready then. Put on some of your woman's clothes, a great scarf and a mask, and you shall presently receive orders.—[*Calls within*] Here, who's there? Get me a chair quickly.

Enter Servant.

Ser. There are chairs at the door, madam.

Ber. 'Tis well; I'm coming. [*Exit Servant.*

Aman. But pray, Berinthia, before you go, tell me how I may know this filthy thing, if she should be so forward (as I suppose she will) to come to the rendezvous first; for methinks I would fain view her a little.

Ber. Why, she's about my height; and very well shaped.

Aman. I thought she had been a little crooked?

Ber. O no, she's as straight as I am. But we lose time; come away. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Young Fashion's *Lodgings.*

Enter Young Fashion, *meeting* Lory.

Fash. Well, will the doctor come?

Lory. Sir, I sent a porter to him as you ordered me. He found him with a pipe of tobacco and a great tankard of ale, which he said he would dispatch while I could tell three, and be here.

Fash. He does not suspect 'twas I that sent for him.

Lory. Not a jot, sir; he divines as little for himself as he does for other folks.

Fash. Will he bring nurse with him?

Lory. Yes.

Fash. That's well; where's Coupler?

Lory. He's half-way up the stairs taking breath; he must play his bellows a little, before he can get to the top.

Enter Coupler.

Fash. Oh, here he is.—Well, Old Phthisic, the doctor's coming.

Coup. Would the pox had the doctor!—I'm quite out of wind.—[*To* Lory] Set me a chair, sirrah. Ah!—[*Sits down. To* Young Fashion] Why the plague canst not thou lodge upon the ground-floor?

Fash. Because I love to lie as near heaven as I can.

Coup. Prithee, let heaven alone; ne'er affect tending that way; thy center's downwards.

Fash. That's impossible! I have too much ill-luck in this world to be damned in the next.

Coup. Thou art out in thy logic. Thy major is true, but thy minor is false; for thou art the luckiest fellow in the universe.

Fash. Make out that.

Coup. I'll do't: last night the devil ran away with the parson of Fatgoose living.

Fash. If he had run away with the parish too, what's that to me?

Coup. I'll tell thee what it's to thee.—This living is worth five hundred pounds a-year, and the presentation of it is thine, if thou canst prove thyself a lawful husband to Miss Hoyden.

Fash. Sayest thou so, my protector? Then, egad, I shall have a brace of evidences here presently.

Coup. The nurse and the doctor?

Fash. The same. The devil himself won't have interest enough to make 'em withstand it.

Coup. That we shall see presently.—Here they come.

Enter Nurse and Bull; *they start back, seeing* Young Fashion.

Nurse. Ah, goodness, Roger, we are betrayed!

Fash. [*laying hold of them*]. Nay, nay, ne'er flinch for the matter, for I have you safe.—Come to your trials immediately; I have no time to give you copies of your indictment. There sits your judge.

Both [*kneeling*]. Pray, sir, have compassion on us.

Nurse. I hope, sir, my years will move your pity; I am an aged woman.

Coup. That is a moving argument indeed.

Bull. I hope, sir, my character will be considered; I am heaven's ambassador.

Coup. Are not you a rogue of sanctity?

Bull. Sir (with respect to my function), I do wear a gown.

Coup. Did not you marry this vigorous young fellow to a plump young buxom wench?

Nurse [*aside to* Bull]. Don't confess, Roger, unless you are hard put to it indeed.

Coup. Come, out with't!—Now is he chewing the cud of his roguery, and grinding a lie between his teeth.

Bull. Sir,—I cannot positively say—I say, sir,—positively I cannot say——

Coup. Come, no equivocations, no Roman turns upon us. Consider thou standest upon Protestant ground, which will slip from under thee like a Tyburn cart; for in this country we have always ten handmen for one Jesuit.

Bull [*to* Young Fashion]. Pray, sir, then will you but permit me to speak one word in private with nurse.

Fash. Thou art always for doing something in private with nurse.

Coup. But pray let his betters be served before him for once: I would do something in private with her myself.—Lory, take care of this reverend gownman in the next room a little.—Retire, priest.—[*Exit* Lory *with* Bull] Now, virgin, I must put the matter home to you a little: do you think it might not be possible to make you speak truth?

Nurse. Alas, sir! I don't know what you mean by truth.

Coup. Nay, 'tis possible thou mayest be a stranger to it.

Fash. Come, nurse, you and I were better friends when we saw one another last; and I still believe you are a very good woman in the bottom. I did deceive you and your young lady, 'tis true, but I always designed to make a very good husband to her, and to be a very good friend to you. And 'tis possible, in the end, she might have found herself happier, and you richer, than ever my brother will make you.

Nurse. Brother! why is your worship then his lordship's brother?

Fash. I am; which you should have known, if I durst have stayed to have told you; but I was forced to take horse a little in haste, you know.

Nurse. You were indeed, sir: poor young man, how he was bound to scour for't! Now won't your worship be angry, if I confess the truth to you?—When I found you were a cheat (with respect be it spoken), I verily believed miss had got some pitiful skipjack varlet or other to her husband, or I had ne'er let her think of marrying again.

Coup. But where was your conscience all this while, woman? Did not that stare in your face with huge saucer-eyes, and a great horn upon the forehead? Did not you think you should be damned for such a sin?—Ha?

Fash. Well said, divinity! Press that home upon her.

Nurse. Why, in good truly, sir, I had some fearful thoughts on't, and could never be brought to consent, till Mr. Bull said it was a peckadilla, and he'd secure my soul for a tithe-pig.

Fash. There was a rogue for you!

Coup. And he shall thrive accordingly; he shall have a good living.—Come, honest nurse, I see you have butter in your compound; you can melt. Some compassion you can have of this handsome young fellow.

Nurse. I have, indeed, sir.

Fash. Why then, I'll tell you what you shall do for me. You know what a warm living here is fallen; and that it must be in the disposal of him who has the disposal of miss. Now if you and the doctor will agree to prove my marriage, I'll present him to it, upon condition he makes you his bride.

Nurse. Naw the blessing of the Lord follow your good worship both by night and by day!—Let him be fetched in by the ears; I'll soon bring his nose to the grindstone.

Coup. [*aside*]. Well said, old white-leather!—[*Aloud*] Hey, bring in the prisoner there!

Re-enter Lory *with* Bull.

Coup. Come, advance, holy man. Here's your duck does not think fit to retire with you into the chancel at this time; but she has a proposal to make to you in the face of the congregation.—Come, nurse, speak for yourself, you are of age.

Nurse. Roger, are not you a wicked man, Roger, to set your strength against a weak woman, and persuade her it was no sin to conceal miss's nuptials? My conscience flies in my face for it, thou priest of Baal! and I

find by woful experience, thy absolution is not worth an old cassock; therefore I am resolved to confess the truth to the whole world, though I die a beggar for it. But his worship overflows with his mercy and his bounty; he is not only pleased to forgive us our sins, but designs thou sha't squat thee down in Fatgoose living; and which is more than all, has prevailed with me to become the wife of thy bosom.

Fash. All this I intend for you, doctor. What you are to do for me I need not tell you.

Bull. Your worship's goodness is unspeakable. Yet there is one thing seems a point of conscience; and conscience is a tender babe. If I should bind myself, for the sake of this living, to marry nurse, and maintain her afterwards, I doubt it might be looked on as a kind of simony.

Coup. [*rising up*]. If it were sacrilege, the living's worth it: therefore no more words, good doctor; but with the parish—[*Giving Nurse to him*] here—take the parsonage-house. 'Tis true, 'tis a little out of repair; some dilapidations there are to be made good; the windows are broke, the wainscot is warped, the ceilings are peeled, and the walls are cracked; but a little glazing, painting, whitewash, and plaster, will make it last thy time.

Bull. Well, sir, if it must be so, I shan't contend. What Providence orders, I submit to.

Nurse. And so do I, with all humility.

Coup. Why, that now was spoke like good people. Come, my turtle-doves, let us go help this poor pigeon to his wandering mate again; and after institution and induction, you shall all go a-cooing together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

LOVELESS'S *Lodgings.*

Enter AMANDA *in a scarf, etc., as just returned, her Woman following her.*

Aman. Prithee what care I who has been here?

Woman. Madam, 'twas my Lady Bridle and my Lady Tiptoe.

Aman. My Lady Fiddle and my Lady Faddle! What dost stand troubling me with the visits of a parcel of impertinent women? When they are well seamed with the small-pox, they won't be so fond of showing their faces.—There are more coquettes about this town——

Woman. Madam, I suppose they only came to return your ladyship's visit, according to the custom of the world.

Aman. Would the world were on fire, and you in the middle on't! Begone! leave me!—[*Exit Woman.*

At last I am convinced. My eyes are testimonies of his falsehood. The base, ungrateful, perjured villain!—
Good gods! what slippery stuff are men compos'd of!
Sure the account of their creation's false,
And 'twas the woman's rib that they were form'd of.
But why am I thus angry?
This poor relapse should only move my scorn.
'Tis true,
The roving flights of his unfinished youth
Had strong excuses from the plea of nature;
Reason had thrown the reins loose on his neck,
And slipped him to unlimited desire.
If therefore he went wrong, he had a claim
To my forgiveness, and I did him right.
But since the years of manhood rein him in,
And reason, well digested into thought,
Has pointed out the course he ought to run;
If now he strays,
'Twould be as weak and mean in me to pardon,
As it had been in him to offend. But hold:
'Tis an ill cause indeed, where nothing's to be said for't.
My beauty possibly is in the wane;
Perhaps sixteen has greater charms for him:
Yes, there's the secret. But let him know,
My quiver's not entirely emptied yet,
I still have darts, and I can shoot 'em too;
They're not so blunt, but they can enter still:
The want's not in my power, but in my will.
Virtue's his friend; or, through another's heart,
I yet could find the way to make his smart.
[*Going off, she meets* WORTHY.
Ha! he here!
Protect me, Heaven! for this looks ominous.

Enter WORTHY.

Wor. You seem disordered, madam; I hope there's no misfortune happened to you?

Aman. None that will long disorder me, I hope.

Wor. Whate'er it be disturbs you, I would to heaven
'Twere in my power to bear the pain,
Till I were able to remove the cause.

Aman. I hope ere long it will remove itself.
At least, I have given it warning to be gone.

Wor. Would I durst ask, where 'tis the thorn torments you!
Forgive me, if I grow inquisitive;
'Tis only with desire to give you ease.

Aman. Alas! 'tis in a tender part. It can't be drawn without a world of pain: yet out it must; for it begins to fester in my heart.

Wor. If 'tis the sting of unrequited love,

remove it instantly: I have a balm will quickly heal the wound.

Aman. You'll find the undertaking difficult: the surgeon, who already has attempted it, has much tormented me.

Wor. I'll aid him with a gentler hand, if you will give me leave.

Aman. How soft soe'er the hand may be, there still is terror in the operation.

Wor. Some few preparatives would make it easy, could I persuade you to apply 'em. Make home reflections, madam, on your slighted love: weigh well the strength and beauty of your charms: rouse up that spirit women ought to bear, and slight your god, if he neglects his angel. With arms of ice receive his cold embraces, and keep your fire for those who come in flames. Behold a burning lover at your feet, his fever raging in his veins! See how he trembles, how he pants! See how he glows, how he consumes! Extend the arms of mercy to his aid; his zeal may give him title to your pity, although his merit cannot claim your love.

Aman. Of all my feeble sex, sure I must be the weakest, should I again presume to think on love. [*Sighing*] Alas! my heart has been too roughly treated.

Wor. 'Twill find the greater bliss in softer usage.

Aman. But where's that usage to be found?

Wor. 'Tis here, within this faithful breast; which if you doubt, I'll rip it up before your eyes; lay all its secrets open to your view; And then, you'll see 'twas sound.

Aman. With just such honest words as these, the worst of men deceived me.

Wor. He therefore merits all revenge can do; his fault is such, the extent and stretch of vengeance cannot reach it. Oh! make me but your instrument of justice; you'll find me execute it with such zeal, as shall convince you I abhor the crime.

Aman. The rigor of an executioner has more the face of cruelty than justice: and he who puts the cord about the wretch's neck, is seldom known to exceed him in his morals.

Wor. What proof then can I give you of my truth?

Aman. There is on earth but one.

Wor. And is that in my power?

Aman. It is: and one that would so thoroughly convince me, I should be apt to rate your heart so high, I possibly might purchase 't with a part of mine.

Wor. Then heaven, thou art my friend, and I am blest; for if 'tis in my power, my will I'm sure will reach it. No matter what the terms may be, when such a recompense is offer'd. Oh! tell me quickly what this proof must be! What is it will convince you of my love?

Aman. I shall believe you love me as you ought, if from this moment you forbear to ask whatever is unfit for me to grant.—You pause upon it, sir.—I doubt, on such hard terms, a woman's heart is scarcely worth the having.

Wor. A heart, like yours, on any terms is worth it; 'twas not on that I paused. But I was thinking [*Drawing nearer to her*] whether some things there may not be, which woman cannot grant without a blush, and yet which men may take without offence. [*Taking her hand*] Your hand, I fancy, may be of the number. Oh, pardon me! if I commit a rape [*Kissing it eagerly*] upon't; and thus devour it with my kisses.

Aman. O heavens! let me go.

Wor. Never, whilst I have strength to hold you here. [*Forcing her to sit down on a couch*] My life, my soul, my goddess—Oh, forgive me!

Aman. Oh, whither am I going? Help, heaven, or I am lost.

Wor. Stand neuter, gods, this once, I do invoke you.

Aman. Then save me, virtue, and the glory's thine.

Wor. Nay, never strive.

Aman. I will, and conquer, too. My forces rally bravely to my aid, [*Breaking from him*] and thus I gain the day.

Wor. Then mine as bravely double their attack; [*Seizing her again*] and thus I wrest it from you. Nay, struggle not; for all's in vain: or death or victory; I am determined.

Aman. And so am I: [*Rushing from him*] Now keep your distance, or we part forever.

Wor. [*offering again*]. For heaven's sake!—

Aman. [*going*]. Nay then, farewell!

Wor. Oh, stay! and see the magic force of love. [*Kneeling, and holding by her clothes*] Behold this raging lion at your feet, struck dead with fear, and tame as charms can make him. What must I do to be forgiven by you?

Aman. Repent, and never more offend.

Wor. Repentance for past crimes is just and easy; but sin no more's a task too hard for mortals.

Aman. Yet those who hope for heaven must use their best endeavors to perform it.

Wor. Endeavors we may use, but flesh and blood are got in t'other scale; and they are ponderous things.

Aman. Whate'er they are, there is a weight in resolution sufficient for their balance. The soul, I do confess, is usually so careless of its charge, so soft, and so indulgent to desire, it leaves the reins in the wild hand of nature, who like a Phæton, drives the fiery chariot, and sets the world on flame. Yet still the sovereignty is in the mind, whene'er it pleases to exert its force. Perhaps you may not think it worth your

while to take such mighty pains for my esteem; but that I leave to you.
You see the price I set upon my heart;
Perhaps 'tis dear: but, spite of all your art
You'll find on cheaper terms we ne'er shall part.

[*Exit.*

Wor. Sure there's divinity about her! And sh'as dispensed some portion on't to me. For what but now was the wild flame of love, or (to dissect that specious term) the vile, the gross desires of flesh and blood, is in a moment turned to adoration. The coarser appetite of nature's gone, and 'tis, methinks, the food of angels I require. How long this influence may last, heaven knows; but in this moment of my purity, I could on her own terms accept her heart. Yes, lovely woman! I can accept it. For now 'tis doubly worth my care. Your charms are much increased, since thus adorned. When truth's extorted from us, then we own the robe of virtue is a graceful habit.

Could women but our secret counsels scan,
Could they but reach the deep reserves of man,
They'd wear it on, that that of love might last;
For when they throw off one, we soon the other cast.
Their sympathy is such——
The fate of one, the other scarce can fly;
They live together, and together die.

[*Exit.*

Scene V

A Room in Lord Foppington's *House.*

Enter Miss Hoyden *and Nurse.*

Hoyd. But is it sure and certain, say you, he's my lord's own brother?

Nurse. As sure as he's your lawful husband.

Hoyd. Ecod, if I had known that in time, I don't know but I might have kept him: for, between you and I, nurse, he'd have made a husband worth two of this I have. But which do you think you should fancy most, nurse?

Nurse. Why, truly, in my poor fancy, madam, your first husband is the prettier gentleman.

Hoyd. I don't like my lord's shapes, nurse.

Nurse. Why, in good truly, as a body may say, he is but a slam.

Hoyd. What do you think now he puts me in mind of? Don't you remember a long, loose, shambling sort of a horse my father called Washy?

Nurse. As like as two twin-brothers!

Hoyd. Ecod, I have thought so a hundred times: faith, I'm tired of him.

Nurse. Indeed, madam, I think you had e'en as good stand to your first bargain.

Hoyd. Oh, but, nurse, we han't considered the main thing yet. If I leave my lord, I must leave my lady, too; and when I rattle about the streets in my coach, they'll only say, There goes mistress—mistress—mistress what? What's this man's name I have married, nurse?

Nurse. 'Squire Fashion.

Hoyd. 'Squire Fashion is it?—Well, 'Squire, that's better than nothing. Do you think one could not get him made a knight, nurse?

Nurse. I don't know but one might, madam, when the king's in a good humor.

Hoyd. Ecod, that would do rarely. For then he'd be as good a man as my father, you know.

Nurse. By'r Lady, and that's as good as the best of 'em.

Hoyd. So 'tis, faith; for then I shall be my lady, and your ladyship at every word, and that's all I have to care for. Ha, nurse, but hark you me; one thing more, and then I have done. I'm afraid, if I change my husband again, I shan't have so much money to throw about, nurse.

Nurse. Oh, enough's as good as a feast. Besides, madam, one don't know but as much may fall to your share with the younger brother as with the elder. For though these lords have a power of wealth indeed, yet, as I have heard say, they give it all to their sluts and their trulls, who joggle it about in their coaches, with a murrain to 'em! whilst poor madam sits sighing, and wishing, and knotting, and crying, and has not a spare half-crown to buy her a *Practice of Piety.*

Hoyd. Oh, but for that don't deceive yourself, nurse. For this I must say for my lord, and a—[*Snapping her fingers*] for him; he's as free as an open house at Christmas. For this very morning he told me I should have two hundred a year to buy pins. Now, nurse, if he gives me two hundred a year to buy pins, what do you think he'll give me to buy fine petticoats?

Nurse. Ah, my dearest, he deceives thee faully, and he's no better than a rogue for his pains! These Londoners have got a gibberidge with 'em would confound a gipsy. That which they call pin-money is to buy their wives everything in the universal world, down to their very shoe-ties. Nay, I have heard folks say, that some ladies, if they will have gallants, as they call 'em, are forced to find them out of their pin-money too.

Hoyd. Has he served me so, say ye?—Then I'll be his wife no longer, so that's fixed. Look, here he comes, with all the fine folk at's heels. Ecod, nurse, these London

ladies will laugh till they crack again, to see me slip my collar, and run away from my husband. But, d'ye hear? Pray, take care of one thing: when the business comes to break out, be sure you get between me and my father, for you know his tricks; he'll knock me down.

Nurse. **I'll mind him, ne'er fear, madam.**

Enter Lord Foppington, Loveless, Worthy, Amanda, *and* Berinthia.

Lord Fop. **Ladies and gentlemen, you are all welcome.—Loveless, that's my wife; prithee do me the favor to salute her; and dost hear,—**[*Aside to him*] **if thau hast a mind to try thy fartune, to be revenged of me, I won't take it ill, stap my vitals!**

Love. **You need not fear, sir; I'm too fond of my own wife to have the least inclination to yours.** [*All sal'e* Miss Hoyden.

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. **I'd give a thousand paund he would make love to her, that he may see she has sense enough to prefer me to him, though his own wife has not.—**[*Viewing him*] **He's a very beastly fellow, in my opinion.**

Hoyd. [*aside*]. **What a power of fine men there are in this London! He that kissed me first is a goodly gentleman, I promise you. Sure those wives have a rare time on't that live here always.**

Enter Sir Tunbelly Clumsey, *with Musicians, Dancers, etc.*

Sir Tun. **Come, come in, good people, come in! Come, tune your fiddles, tune your fiddles!—**[*To the hautboys*] **Bagpipes, make ready there. Come, strike up.** [*Sings.*

For this is Hoyden's wedding-day,
And therefore we keep holiday,
And come to be merry.

Ha! there's my wench, i'faith. Touch and take, I'll warrant her; she'll breed like a tame rabbit.

Hoyd. [*aside*]. **Ecod, I think my father's gotten drunk before supper.**

Sir Tun. [*to* Loveless *and* Worthy]. **Gentlemen, you are welcome.—**[*Saluting* Amanda *and* Berinthia] **Ladies, by your leave.—**[*Aside*] **Ha! they bill like turtles. Udsookers, they set my old blood a-fire; I shall cuckold somebody before morning.**

Lord Fop. [*to* Sir Tunbelly]. **Sir, you being master of the entertainment, will you desire the company to sit?**

Sir Tun. **Oons, sir, I'm the happiest man on this side the Ganges!**

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. **This is a mighty unaccountable old fellow.—**[*To* Sir Tunbelly] **I said, sir, it would be convenient to ask the company to sit.**

Sir Tun. **Sit?—with all my heart.—Come, take your places, ladies; take your places, gentlemen.—Come, sit down, sit down; a pox of ceremony! take your places.**

[*They sit and the masque begins.*

DIALOGUE BETWEEN CUPID AND HYMEN

1

Cupid. Thou bane to my empire, thou spring of contest,
Thou source of all discord, thou period to rest,
Instruct me, what wretches in bondage can see,
That the aim of their life is still pointed to thee.

2

Hymen. Instruct me, thou little, impertinent god,
From whence all thy subjects have taken the mode
To grow fond of a change, to whatever it be,
And I'll tell thee why those would be bound who are free.

Chorus

For change, we're for change, to whatever it be,
We are neither contented with freedom nor thee.
Constancy's an empty sound,
Heaven, and earth, and all go round,
All the works of Nature move,
And the joys of life and love
Are in variety.

3

Cupid. Were love the reward of a painstaking life,
Had a husband the art to be fond of his wife,
Were virtue so plenty, a wife could afford,
These very hard times, to be true to her lord,
Some specious account might be given of those
Who are tied by the tail, to be led by the nose.

4

But since 'tis the fate of a man and his wife,
To consume all their days in contention and strife;
Since, whatever the bounty of Heaven may create her,
He's morally sure he shall heartily hate her,
I think 'twere much wiser to ramble at large,
And the volleys of love on the herd to discharge.

5

Hymen. Some color of reason thy counsel might bear,
Could a man have no more than his wife to his share:
Or were I a monarch so cruelly just,

To oblige a poor wife to be true to her trust;
But I have not pretended, for many years past,
By marrying of people, to make 'em grow chaste.

6

I therefore advise thee to let me go on,
Thou'lt find I'm the strength and support of thy throne;
For hadst thou but eyes, thou wouldst quickly perceive it,
How smoothly the dart
Slips into the heart
Of a woman that's wed;
Whilst the shivering maid
Stands trembling, and wishing, but dare not receive it.

Chorus

For change, etc.

The Masque ended, enter Young Fashion, Coupler, *and* Bull.

Sir Tun. **So; very fine, very fine, i'faith! this is something like a wedding. Now, if supper were but ready, I'd say a short grace; and if I had such a bedfellow as Hoyden to-night—I'd say as short prayers.**

[*Seeing* Young Fashion. **How now!—What have we got here? A ghost? Nay, it must be so, for his flesh and blood could never have dared to appear before me.—**[*To him*] **Ah, rogue!**

Lord Fop. **Stap my vitals, Tam again?**

Sir Tun. **My lord, will you cut his throat, or shall I?**

Lord Fop. **Leave him to me, sir, if you please.—Prithee, Tam, be so ingenuous now as to tell me what thy business is here?**

Fash. **'Tis with your bride.**

Lord Fop. **Thau art the impudentest fellow that Nature has yet spawned into the warld, strike me speechless!**

Fash. **Why, you know my modesty would have starved me; I sent it a-begging to you, and you would not give it a groat.**

Lord Fop. **And dost thau expect by an excess of assurance to extart a maintenance fram me?**

Fash. [*taking* Miss Hoyden *by the hand*]. **I do intend to extort your mistress from you, and that I hope will prove one.**

Lord Fop. **I ever thaught Newgate or Bedlam would be his fartune, and naw his fate's decided.—Prithee, Loveless, dost know of ever a mad doctor hard by?**

Fash. **There's one at your elbow will cure you presently.—**[*To* Bull] **Prithee, doctor, take him in hand quickly.**

Lord Fop. **Shall I beg the favor of you, sir, to pull your fingers out of my wife's hand?**

Fash. **His wife! Look you there; now I hope you are all satisfied he's mad.**

Lord Fop. **Naw is it nat possible far me to penetrate what species of fall it is thau art driving at!**

Sir Tun. **Here, here, here, let me beat out his brains, and that will decide all.**

Lord Fop. **No; pray, sir, hold, we'll destray him presently accarding to law.**

Fash. [*to* Bull]. **Nay, then advance, doctor. Come, you are a man of conscience, answer boldly to the questions I shall ask. Did you not marry me to this young lady before ever that gentleman there saw her face?**

Bull. **Since the truth must out—I did.**

Fash. **Nurse, sweet nurse, were not you a witness to it?**

Nurse. **Since my conscience bids me speak —I was.**

Fash. [*to* Miss Hoyden]. **Madam, am not I your lawful husband?**

Hoyd. **Truly I can't tell, but you married me first.**

Fash. **Now I hope you are all satisfied?**

Sir Tun. [*offering to strike him, is held by* Loveless *and* Worthy]. **Oons and thunder, you lie!**

Lord Fop. **Pray, sir, be calm; the battle is in disarder, but requires more canduct than courage to rally our forces.—Pray, doctor, one word with you.—**[*Aside to* Bull] **Look you, sir, though I will not presume to calculate your notions of damnation fram the description you give us of hell, yet since there is at least a passibility you may have a pitchfark thrust in your backside, methinks it should not be worth your while to risk your saul in the next warld, for the sake of a beggarly yaunger brather, who is nat able to make your bady happy in this.**

Bull. **Alas! my lord, I have no worldly ends; I speak the truth, heaven knows.**

Lord Fop. **Nay, prithee, never engage heaven in the matter, for by all I can see, 'tis like to prove a business for the devil.**

Fash. **Come, pray, sir, all above-board; no corrupting of evidences, if you please. This young lady is my lawful wife, and I'll justify it in all the courts of England; so your lordship (who always had a passion for variety) may go seek a new mistress if you think fit.**

Lord Fop. **I am struck dumb with his impudence, and cannot pasitively tell whether ever I shall speak again or nat.**

Sir Tun. **Then let me come and examine the business a little, I'll jerk the truth out of 'em presently. Here, give me my dog-whip.**

Fash. **Look you, old gentleman, 'tis in vain to make a noise; if you grow mutinous, I have some friends within call, have swords by their sides above four foot long; therefore be calm, hear the evidence patiently, and when the jury have given their verdict, pass sentence according to law. Here's honest**

Coupler shall be foreman, and ask as many questions as he pleases.

Coup. All I have to ask is, whether nurse persists in her evidence? The parson, I dare swear, will never flinch from his.

Nurse [*to* SIR TUNBELLY, *kneeling*]. I hope in heaven your worship will pardon me. I have served you long and faithfully, but in this thing I was over-reached; your worship, however, was deceived as well as I, and if the wedding-dinner had been ready, you had put madam to bed to him with your own hands.

Sir Tun. But how durst you do this, without acquainting of me?

Nurse. Alas! if your worship had seen how the poor thing begged, and prayed, and clung, and twined about me, like ivy to an old wall, you would say, I who had suckled it and swaddled it, and nursed it both wet and dry, must have had a heart of adamant to refuse it.

Sir Tun. Very well!

Fash. Foreman, I expect your verdict.

Coup. Ladies and gentlemen, what's your opinions?

All. A clear case! a clear case!

Coup. Then, my young folks, I wish you joy.

Sir Tun. [*to* YOUNG FASHION] Come hither, stripling; if it be true then, that thou hast married my daughter, prithee tell me who thou art?

Fash. Sir, the best of my condition is, I am your son-in-law; and the worst of it is, I am brother to that noble peer there.

Sir Tun. Art thou brother to that noble peer?—Why, then, that noble peer, and thee, and thy wife, and the nurse, and the priest—may all go and be damned together.

[*Exit.*

Lord Fop. [*aside*]. Now, for my part, I think the wisest thing a man can do with an aching heart is to put on a serene countenance; for a philosophical air is the most becoming thing in the world to the face of a person of quality. I will therefore bear my disgrace like a great man, and let the people see I am above an affront.—[*Aloud*] Dear Tam, since things are thus fallen aut, prithee give me leave to wish thee jay; I do it *de bon cœur,* strike me dumb! You have married a woman beautiful in her person, charming in her airs, prudent in her conduct, canstant in her inclinations, and of a nice marality, split my windpipe!

Fash. Your lordship may keep up your spirits with your grimace if you please; I shall support mine with this lady, and two thousand pound a-year.—[*Taking* MISS HOYDEN'S *hand*] Come, madam:—

We once again, you see, are man and wife,
And now, perhaps, the bargain's struck for life.
If I mistake, and we should part again,
At least you see you may have choice of men:
Nay, should the war at length such havoc make,
That lovers should grow scarce, yet for your sake,
Kind heaven always will preserve a beau:
[*Pointing to* LORD FOPPINGTON.]
You'll find his lordship ready to come to.

Lord Fop. Her ladyship shall stap my vitals, if I do.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY LORD FOPPINGTON

Gentlemen and Ladies,
These people have regaled you here to-day
(In my opinion) with a saucy play;
In which the author does presume to show,
That coxcomb, *ab origine*—was beau.
Truly, I think the thing of so much weight,
That if some sharp chastisement ben't his fate,
Gad's curse! it may in time destroy the state.
I hold no one its friend, I must confess,
Who would discauntenance your men of dress.
Far, give me leave t'observe, good clothes are things
Have ever been of great support to kings;
All treasons come from slovens, it is nat
Within the reach of gentle beaux to plat;
They have no gall, no spleen, no teeth, no stings,
Of all Gad's creatures, the most harmless things.
Through all recard, no prince was ever slain
By one who had a feather in his brain.
They're men of too refined an education,
To squabble with a court—for a vile dirty nation.
I'm very pasitive you never saw
A thorough republican a finished beau.
Nor, truly, shall you very often see
A Jacobite much better dressed than he.
In shart, through all the courts that I have been in,
Your men of mischief—still are in faul linen.
Did ever one yet dance the Tyburn jig,
With a free air, or a well-pawdered wig?
Did ever highwayman yet bid you stand,
With a sweet bawdy snuff-bax in his hand?
Ar do you ever find they ask your purse
As men of breeding do?—Ladies, Gad's curse!
This author is a dag, and 'tis not fit
You should allow him ev'n one grain of wit:
To which, that his pretense may ne'er be named,
My humble motion is,—he may be damned.

WILLIAM CONGREVE

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

William Congreve was born in the year in which *The Conquest of Granada* was finished (1670), and in that in which Dryden died Congreve wrote his last play (1700). When Dryden was thirty years old, he had not more than entered upon his literary career with two poems of no great promise, one in praise of the dead Cromwell, the other judiciously in welcome to the restored Charles. When Congreve laid down his pen, he had written four comedies, rising to extraordinary brilliancy in *The Way of the World*, and one tragedy, of which it can at least be said that it held the boards for nearly a century. Dryden made the writing of literature in all its current forms a profession; Congreve wished to live and be known as a gentleman rather than to be praised as an author.

Though born in England, Congreve spent his boyhood days in Ireland, whither his father had been sent shortly after the boy's birth to command the garrison at Youghal. About 1681 William went to Kilkenny School, called the Eton of Ireland, and in 1685 he entered Trinity College, Dublin; at both places Swift, though three years ahead of Congreve, was also a student. After the Revolution he crossed to England and in 1691 he was a law student at the Inner Temple. The next year he had abandoned all thoughts of law and had become instead the protégé of Dryden, was hailed as the coming poet, and was associated with prominent men of letters in a translation of *Persius and Juvenal*. In January, 1693, his first play, *The Old Bachelor*, written when he was twenty-one, was produced at Drury Lane. The piece had been revised and polished by Southerne and Dryden, it was acted by Betterton and the fascinating Mrs. Bracegirdle, and with its wonderful dialogue that surpassed anything known to the contemporary stage it was an immediate and lasting success. Thus encouraged, Congreve in the November of the same year was ready with another play, *The Double Dealer*, which did not meet with quite so cordial a reception as the first, though in many respects it is superior. The anger he all too plainly showed at the "impotent objections" of his "illiterate critics" was greatly allayed by Dryden's magnificent praise in his "Commendatory Verses" prefixed to the published work:—

> "Heaven that but once was prodigal before,
> To Shakespeare gave as much; she could not give *him* more."

When Betterton with his fellow-actors left the patent house, the Theatre Royal, he obtained a special license from the king and built the New Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. This theatre was opened in Easter week, 1695, with Congreve's next play, *Love for Love,* and the performance was an unqualified success. So pleased was Congreve that he entered into a contract to deliver a new play a year, an agreement, which like Dryden in a similar case, he failed to keep. Two years later he furnished the company with his only tragedy, *The Mourning Bride,* a play of Websterian gloom without the Websterian power. Dr. Johnson gave it a kind of spurious immortality by characterizing the description of the temple in Act II as the "finest poetical passage he had ever read," of which Hazlitt justly remarks that Johnson "could have done nearly as well himself for a single passage, in the same vein of moralizing and sentimental description." The next year (1698) the Puritan conscience after nearly forty years of enforced silence found vigorous expression in the strident tones of Jeremy Collier's *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage.* After some delay Congreve replied with his unfortunate and ineffectual *Amendments on Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations.* Even in the opinion of the friends of Congreve and the stage the parson had the better of the controversy. In 1700 he wrote his last and best comedy, *The Way of the World,* which was freer from reproach on the score of morals than the earlier plays, though none the less a just reflection of the times in which he lived. The reception of the play was not favorable, and through the remaining twenty-nine years of his life Congreve did not again risk public disapproval by writing anything for the theatre. He lived the life of one of his own gay heroes with London as his stage. He was made comfortable by government offices, that of commissioner for licensing hackney coaches till 1707—an employment only remotely suggestive of Pegasus and poetry,—commissioner of wine licenses from 1705 to 1714, secretary for Jamaica from 1714 to the end, so that in his later days his income amounted to £1200, a goodly sum for an old bachelor. He was a friend of the great in the land, Swift, Addison, Steele, Gay, Pope, and Arbuthnot, and achieved the supreme distinction of having Pope's *Iliad* dedicated to him. He was visited by Voltaire and became the chosen friend of Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, the daughter of the great duke, seemingly preferring her to the far more admirable Mrs. Bracegirdle. A week after his death on January 19, 1729, he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

As already noted, *The Way of the World* was not a success when first performed. Steele in his "Commendatory Verses" prefixed to the published work generously ascribes the cause to the dull minds of the audience:

> "No sense of wit when dull spectators know
> But in distorted gesture, farce, and show;
> How could, great author, your aspiring mind
> Dare to write only to the few refined?"

It is usually unwise to blame the rude spectators for the failure of a play, for its dramatic worth depends in large measure upon its direct appeal to the groundlings as well as to the judicious. It is accordingly not at all difficult for the modern reader, as Mr. Archer has pointed out, to see that this play might fail on its first performances; the comedy is by no means easy of comprehension even on reading; it is only when reread that it is recognized as one of the rarest productions of the comic spirit in our literature.

There are several things that would contribute to the mystifying of an audience unfamiliar with the play. There is an irritating embarrassment of relationships, legal and illegal, among the *dramatis personæ*, husbands and wives, mistresses and ex-mistresses, lovers and followers, half-brothers and cousins, mother and daughter, nephew and niece, a very real aunt and a bogus uncle. Only frequent reference to the printed list will keep these relationships straight in the mind of the reader; the mere spectator would be hopelessly muddled, as, for instance, when Fainall says to Mirabell, "he [Sir Wilfull Witwoud] is half-brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too." Furthermore, dramatic unity is lacking in the conduct of the several actions and in their relations to one another. The main design by which Mirabell expects to win Millamant and which is based on a psychological improbability is never brought to an actual test; it vanishes amid the storm which Lady Wishfort raises between Acts IV and V, when she learns how she has been duped by her enemy and her servant. Early in Act III it was quite clear to the audience that the design would not live through the play, but it was kept alive by the will of the dramatist through Act IV for the sake of a genuinely comic situation. When now with an utter disregard for dramatic art Mirabell's scheme is eventually strangled off stage, there is nothing left for the dramatist but the equally inartistic device, the creation of an entirely new plan in Act V. No time remains for the development of anything plausible; only the *deus ex machina* is possible. Fainall's blackmailing plot is succeeding, when Mirabell appears with convenient and hitherto unmentioned "papers," thwarts the villains, appeases Lady Wishfort, and wins Millamant. It is thus manifest that the course of the action is at times confusing and purposeless, and that the play might disappoint an audience concerned to follow the plots and not merely to luxuriate in the brilliancy of dialogue or in the clear-cut delineation of character.

It is these two qualities along with what Meredith calls "a certain succinctness of style" that give *The Way of the World* its abiding fascination. To the reader faults of construction seem a minor matter—they may be recognized and then forgotten—but the comic spirit that possessed England during the forty years following the Restoration may well appear to him to have found in this play its most exquisite embodiment. This comic spirit did not manifest itself so much in the manipulation of intrigue as in the

clash of wit; in fact, Congreve was content to let his plot suffer for the sake of bright and sparkling dialogue. One has only to run through the play to see how few scenes really develop plot and how many have their intrinsic interest in brilliant characterization and racy dialogue. So in Act I there is the clever showing up of Petulant and Witwoud by Mirabell. In Act II we have the amusing colloquy between Millamant and Mirabell, which leaves the man exhausted, so swift and sure is the lady's wit. In Act III Lady Wishfort mercilessly bullies Peg and is as mercilessly duped by Foible; Millamant plays with Mrs. Marwood as cheerfully and as remorselessly as a cat with a mouse; Sir Wilfull turns the tables in his blunt and ludicrous fashion upon the city fops to the discomfiture especially of his half-brother, who has just entered upon the fop's estate. In Act IV Lady Wishfort is allowed to continue in her delusion regarding Sir Rowland long after the plot demands that she should be freed from it, because it is too good a situation to throw away; so also the interviews between Sir Wilfull and Millamant come to nothing in the action but are delightful in the clash of the vivacious beauty and the bashful country knight; the wit of the contract scene between Mirabell and Millamant, the cleverest persons in the play, flashes like a rapier in the sunlight; Sir Wilfull drunk is even more diverting than Sir Wilfull sober and helps on the plot just as little. In Act V Lady Wishfort's temper finds its supreme expression in choice Billingsgate when she denounces Foible.

It is part of Congreve's art to arouse curiosity about his leading characters by means of exposition. Mirabell through Act I keeps referring to Millamant so that the reader is on the *qui vive* for her appearance, which further to arouse curiosity is deferred to Act II. We learn something of Lady Wishfort from Mirabell's impolite remarks and from her important position in the "cabal nights." Fainall acts as a sort of announcer to Witwoud and Sir Wilfull, and Witwoud does as much for Petulant. This indirect vision affords an opportunity for the display of more or less malicious and always piquant wit, and it also furnishes a starting point for the comprehension of a character. But it is dull by comparison with the perfect self-revelation of the personages themselves when they appear on the stage. There is no mystery, nothing inscrutable in the characters of a Congreve comedy. They appeal at once to the intellect and they are as clear cut as a diamond.

And what great revealing power there is in the language they speak! Lady Wishfort is particularly skilful in her nice discrimination in epithets. Whether she is blazing her wrath upon the head of blundering Peg, or as a mere tool in the hands of "rare Foible" is venting her spleen against Mirabell, her dearest foe, or indignant at her nephew's drunken behavior is hurling abuse at him while in the same breath trying to excuse him to Millamant, whom she would have him marry, or almost hysterical with rage at the discovery of the trick played upon her is screaming like a fishwife at

the offending Foible, whom she "took from washing of old gauze and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose over a chafing dish of starved embers, and dining behind a traverse rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage"—at all times she has a vocabulary of vituperation both rich and rare. Very piquant without being disgusting, as they might easily be, are the scenes in which she is angling for the pretended Sir Rowland, wherein she is presented as the seasoned coquette of fifty-five years deliberating how she may charm him with "blushes and recomposing airs beyond comparison." Almost as choice in his diction is the lubberly knight, Sir Wilfull; he can reduce to temporary silence the mincer of fine words, the city fop; he is bashful and painfully repetitious when left alone to propose to Millamant, but when drunk he is splendidly loquacious and breaks out into joyous song, proclaiming his Christianity and his orthodoxy, "with a fig for your sultan and sophy"; he is duly apologetic when sober again, and offers to make magnificent amends, "If I have broke anything I'll pay for 't, an' it cost a pound."

But it is in the character of Millamant that Congreve has surpassed himself and his contemporaries. Perhaps he was inspired by the matchless Mrs. Bracegirdle, whom he greatly admired and for whom he wrote the part. How excellently and in what buoyant prose is the heroine introduced by the enraptured Mirabell: "Here she comes, i' faith, full sail, with her fan spread, and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders." In Meredith's words she "is a perfect portrait of a coquette, both in her resistance to Mirabell and the manner of her surrender, and also in her tongue." (*The Idea of Comedy,* p. 29.) The very spirit of laughter rings in her words, especially when she plays like lambent lightning around the disconcerted Mrs. Marwood, whose sinister threat brings out only a demand for a song to keep up her spirits. Mirabell, whom Meredith calls "the sprightliest male figure of English comedy" (op. cit., p. 23), is left in a whirl after he tried conclusions with her in Act II. In reply to his assertion that "beauty is the lover's gift," she retorts, "Lord, what is a lover that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases; and then, if one pleases, one makes more." Like Beatrice, she speaks poniards and every word stabs. Note her declaration of independence containing the terms on which she will be content to "dwindle into a wife": "Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well-bred: let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while; and as well-bred as if we were not married at all." And after these words of boisterous badinage she confesses to Mrs. Fainall very humbly and feelingly, "Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing,—for I find I love him violently." She is of Congreve's characters about the only one that arouses any affection. She falls short of Rosalind and Beatrice, who possess in full measure that surpassing charm which compels unquestioning love. Only in

rare speeches, as in the one just quoted, do we get a glimpse of that side of her nature; in this side Congreve was not primarily interested. It is in her intellectual keenness and her abounding vivacity that he showed his consummate skill and in these qualities he placed her not below the clever heroines of *As You Like It* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

It is such characterization, such flash of wit, such perfection of speech that give *The Way of the World* its enduring place in English literature. These qualities did not ensure it dramatic success in Congreve's time because they were obscured by ineffective plotting, but as manifestations of the comic spirit they will win among readers admiration for the "aspiring mind" of the author.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

Audire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui mœchos non vultis, [ut omni parte laborent].
—HORAT. Lib. i. Sat. 2. [37-38].
[Hæc] metuat, doti deprensa.—*Ibid.*, Lib. i. Sat. 2. [131].

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. Betterton

Of those few fools who with ill stars are curst,
Sure scribbling fools, called poets, fare the worst:
For they're a sort of fools which Fortune makes,
And after she has made 'em fools, forsakes.
With Nature's oafs 'tis quite a different case,
For Fortune favors all her idiot-race.
In her own nest the cuckoo-eggs we find,
O'er which she broods to hatch the changeling-kind.
No portion for her own she has to spare,
So much she dotes on her adopted care.
Poets are bubbles, by the town drawn in,
Suffered at first some trifling stakes to win;
But what unequal hazards do they run!
Each time they write they venture all they've won:
The squire that's buttered still, is sure to be undone.
This author heretofore has found your favor;
But pleads no merit from his past behavior.
To build on that might prove a vain presumption,
Should grants, to poets made, admit resumption:
And in Parnassus he must lose his seat,
If that be found a forfeited estate.

He owns with toil he wrought the following scenes;
But, if they're naught, ne'er spare him for his pains:
Damn him the more; have no commiseration
For dullness on mature deliberation,
He swears he'll not resent one hissed-off scene,
Nor, like those peevish wits, his play maintain,
Who, to assert their sense, your taste arraign.
Some plot we think he has, and some new thought;
Some humor too, no farce; but that's a fault.
Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect;
For so reformed a town who dares correct?
To please, this time, has been his sole pretence,
He'll not instruct, lest it should give offence.
Should he by chance a knave or fool expose,
That hurts none here, sure here are none of those:
In short, our play shall (with your leave to show it)
Give you one instance of a passive poet,
Who to your judgments yields all resignation;
So save or damn, after your own discretion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Fainall, *in love with* Mrs. Marwood.
Mirabell, *in love with* Mrs. Millamant.
Witwoud, Petulant, } *Followers of* Mrs. Millamant.
Sir Wilfull Witwoud, *Half-brother to* Witwoud, *and Nephew to* Lady Wishfort.
Waitwell, *Servant to* Mirabell.
Coachmen, Dancers, Footmen, and Attendants.

Lady Wishfort, *Enemy to* Mirabell, *for having falsely pretended love to her.*
Mrs. Millamant, *a fine Lady, Niece to* Lady Wishfort, *and loves* Mirabell.
Mrs. Marwood, *Friend to* Mr. Fainall, *and likes* Mirabell.
Mrs. Fainall, *Daughter to* Lady Wishfort, *and Wife to* Fainall, *formerly Friend to* Mirabell.
Foible, *Woman to* Lady Wishfort.
Mincing, *Woman to* Mrs. Millamant.
Betty, *Waiting-maid at a Chocolate-house.*
Peg, *Maid to* Lady Wishfort.

Scene.—London.

ACT I

Scene I

A Chocolate-house.

Mirabell *and* Fainall, *rising from cards,* Betty *waiting.*

Mir. **You are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall!**

Fain. **Have we done?**

Mir. **What you please: I'll play on to entertain you.**

Fain. **No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the coldness of a losing gamester lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill fortune than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.**

Mir. **You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures.**

Fain. **Prithee, why so reserved? Something has put you out of humor.**

Mir. **Not at all: I happen to be grave today, and you are gay; that's all.**

Fain. **Confess, Millamant and you quarrelled last night after I left you; my fair cousin has some humors that would tempt the patience of a Stoic. What, some coxcomb**

came in, and was well received by her, while you were by?

Mir. Witwoud and Petulant; and what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius; or to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in.

Fain. O, there it is then! She has a lasting passion for you, and with reason.—What, then my wife was there?

Mir. Yes, and Mrs. Marwood, and three or four more, whom I never saw before. Seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whispered one another; then complained aloud of the vapors, and after fell into a profound silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mir. For which reason I resolved not to stir. At last the good old lady broke through her painful taciturnity with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose, and, with a constrained smile, told her I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a visit began to be troublesome. She reddened, and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mir. She is more mistress of herself than to be under the necessity of such a resignation.

Fain. What! though half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

Mir. I was then in such a humor, that I should have been better pleased if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their cabal nights; they have 'em three times a-week, and meet by turns at one another's apartments, where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murdered reputations of the week. You and I are excluded; and it was once proposed that all the male sex should be excepted; but somebody moved that, to avoid scandal, there might be one man of the community; upon which motion Witwoud and Petulant were enrolled members.

Mir. And who may have been the foundress of this sect? My Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind; and full of the vigor of fifty-five, declares for a friend and ratafia; and let posterity shift for itself, she'll breed no more.

Fain. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal your love to her niece, has provoked this separation; had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

Mir. I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and compliment her with the imputation of an affair with a young fellow, which I carried so far, that I told her the malicious town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when she lay in of a dropsy, persuaded her she was reported to be in labor. The devil's in't, if an old woman is to be flattered further, unless a man should endeavor downright personally to debauch her; and that my virtue forbade me. But for the discovery of this amour I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood.

Fain. What should provoke her to be your enemy, unless she has made you advances which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

Mir. She was always civil to me till of late.—I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice, and think that she who does not refuse 'em everything, can refuse 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell; and though you may have cruelty enough not to satisfy a lady's longing, you have too much generosity not to be tender of her honor. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected, and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

Mir. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you than is your wife.

Fain. Fy, fy, friend! if you grow censorious I must leave you.—I'll look upon the gamesters in the next room.

Mir. Who are they?

Fain. Petulant and Witwoud.—[*To* Betty.] Bring me some chocolate. [*Exit.*

Mir. Betty, what says your clock?

Bet. Turned of the last canonical hour, sir. [*Exit.*

Mir. How pertinently the jade answers me!—[*Looking on his watch.*]—Ha! almost one o'clock!—Oh, y'are come!

Enter Footman.

Well, is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

Foot. Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up; and no hopes appearing of dispatch; besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have failed before it came to our turn; so we drove round to Duke's-place; and there they were rivetted in a trice.

Mir. So, so, you are sure they are married.

Foot. Married and bedded, sir; I am witness.

Mir. Have you the certificate?

Foot. Here it is, sir.

Mir. Has the tailor brought Waitwell's clothes home, and the new liveries?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Mir. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the consummation till farther orders. Bid Waitwell shake his ears, and Dame Partlet rustle up her feathers, and meet me at one o'clock by Rosamond's Pond, that I may see her before she returns to her lady; and as you tender your ears be secret.

[*Exit Footman.*

Re-enter Fainall *and* Betty.

Fain. Joy of your success, Mirabell; you look pleased.

Mir. Aye; I have been engaged in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal night. I wonder, Fainall, that you who are married and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engaged are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

Mir. I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the scandal: for a woman who is not a fool can have but one reason for associating with a man who is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see Witwoud entertained by Millamant?

Mir. Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

Fain. You do her wrong; for, to give her her due, she has wit.

Mir. She has beauty enough to make any man think so; and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate lover, methinks you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

Mir. And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces; sifted her, and separated her failings; I studied 'em, and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes one day or other to hate her heartily: to which end I so used myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less and less disturbance; till in a few days it became habitual to me to remember 'em without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and in all probability, in a little time longer, I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her! Be half as well acquainted with her charms, as you are with her defects, and my life on't, you are your own man again.

Mir. Say you so?

Fain. Ay, ay, I have experience: I have a wife, and so forth.

Enter Messenger.

Mes. Is one squire Witwoud here?

Bet. Yes, what's your business?

Mes. I have a letter for him, from his brother Sir Wilfull, which I am charged to deliver into his own hands.

Bet. He's in the next room, friend—that way.

[*Exit Messenger.*

Mir. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilfull Witwoud?

Fain. He is expected to-day. Do you know him?

Mir. I have seen him. He promises to be an extraordinary person; I think you have the honor to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half-brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too.

Mir. I had rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel.

Mir. For travel! Why, the man that I mean is above forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honor of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mir. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

Fain. By no means; 'tis better as 'tis. 'Tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstocked.

Mir. Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant, and those of the squire his brother, anything related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwoud grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

Mir. So one will be rotten before he be ripe, and the other will be rotten without ever being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilfull is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy.—But when he's drunk he's as loving as the monster in *The Tempest*, and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due, he has something of good nature, and does not always want wit.

Mir. Not always: but as often as his memory fails him, and his commonplace of comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folks' wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approved, yet it is now and then to be endured. He has indeed one good quality, he is not exceptious; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest; and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the original!

Enter WITWOUD.

Wit. Afford me your compassion, my dears! Pity me, Fainall! Mirabell, pity me!

Mir. I do from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty?

Bet. Did not a messenger bring you one but now, sir?

Wit. Ay, but no other?

Bet. No, sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard.—A messenger! a mule, a beast of burden! he has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another: and what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory.

Mir. A fool, and your brother, Witwoud!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half-brother. My half-brother he is; no nearer, upon honor.

Mir. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a fool.

Wit. Good, good, Mirabell, *le drôle!* Good, good; hang him, don't let's talk of him.—Fainall, how does your lady? Gad, I say anything in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I should ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestic. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say: but she's the best woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation would go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall.—Your judgment, Mirabell.

Mir. You had better step and ask his wife, if you would be credibly informed.

Wit. Mirabell?

Mir. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons;—gad, I have forgot what I was going to say to you!

Mir. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but prithee excuse me:—my memory is such a memory.

Mir. Have a care of such apologies, Witwoud; for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain, either of the spleen or his memory.

Fain. What have you done with Petulant?

Wit. He's reckoning his money—my money it was.—I have no luck to-day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play: for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee; since you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his of course.

Mir. I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwoud.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and would breed debates.—Petulant's my friend, and a very honest fellow, and a very pretty fellow, and has a smattering—faith and troth, a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit: nay, I'll do him justice. I'm his friend, I won't wrong him.—And if he had any judgement in the world, he would not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend.

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred?

Wit. No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I must own:—no more breeding than a bum-bailiff, that I grant you:—'tis pity; the fellow has fire and life.

Mir. What, courage?

Wit. Hum, faith, I don't know as to that, I can't say as to that. Yes, faith, in a controversy, he'll contradict anybody.

Mir. Though 'twere a man whom he feared, or a woman whom he loved.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks;—we have all our failings: you are too hard upon him, you are, faith. Let me excuse him—I can defend most of his faults, except one or two: one he has, that's the truth on't; if he were my brother, I could not acquit him:—that, indeed, I could wish were otherwise.

Mir. Ay, marry, what's that, Witwoud?

Wit. O pardon me!—Expose the infirmities of my friend!—No, my dear, excuse me there.

Fain. What, I warrant he's unsincere, or 'tis some such trifle.

Wit. No, no; what if he be? 'tis no matter for that, his wit will excuse that: a wit should no more be sincere, than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

Mir. Maybe you think him too positive?

Wit. No, no, his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

Fain. Too illiterate?

Wit. That! that's his happiness:—his want of learning gives him the more opportunities to show his natural parts.

Mir. He wants words?

Wit. Ay: but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to explain his meaning.

Fain. He's impudent?

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mir. Vain?

Wit. No.

Mir. What! He speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion?

Wit. Truths! ha! ha! ha! No, no; since you will have it,—I mean, he never speaks truth at all,—that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault.

Enter Coachman.

Coach. Is Master Petulant here, mistress?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three gentlewomen in a coach would speak with him.

Fain. O brave Petulant! three!

Bet. I'll tell him.

Coach. You must bring two dishes of chocolate and a glass of cinnamon-water.

[*Exeunt* Betty *and Coachman.*

Wit. That should be for two fasting strumpets, and a bawd troubled with the wind. Now you may know what the three are.

Mir. You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toasting. But to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom he allows coach-hire, and something more, by the week, to call on him once a day at public places.

Mir. How!

Wit. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him.—Why, this is nothing to what he used to do:—before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself.

Fain. Call for himself! What dost thou mean?

Wit. Mean! Why, he would slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him—as soon as your back was turned—whip he was gone!—then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a mask, slap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice, where he would send in for himself; that I mean, call for himself, wait for himself; nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

Mir. I confess this is something extraordinary.—I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a-coming: Oh! I ask his pardon.

Enter Petulant *and* Betty.

Bet. Sir, the coach stays.

Pet. Well, well;—I come.—'Sbud, a man had as good be a professed midwife as a professed whoremaster, at this rate! to be knocked up and raised at all hours, and in all places! Pox on 'em, I won't come!—D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come:—let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out.

Fain. You are very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one, let it pass: I have a humor to be cruel.

Mir. I hope they are not persons of condition that you use at this rate.

Pet. Condition! condition's a dried fig, if I am not in humor!—By this hand, if they were your—a—a—your what d'ye-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off, if I want appetite.

Mir. What d'ye-call-'ems! What are they, Witwoud?

Wit. Empresses, my dear:—by your what-d'ye-call-'ems he means sultana queens.

Pet. Ay, Roxalanas.

Mir. Cry you mercy!

Fain. Witwoud says they are—

Pet. What does he say th' are?

Wit. I? Fine ladies, I say.

Pet. Pass on, Witwoud.—Hark'ee, by this light, his relations:—two co-heiresses his cousins, and an old aunt, who loves caterwauling better than a conventicle.

Wit. Ha! ha! ha! I had a mind to see how the rogue would come off.—Ha! ha! ha! Gad, I can't be angry with him, if he had said they were my mother and my sisters.

Mir. No!

Wit. No; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me. Dear Petulant!

Bet. They are gone, sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps complexion, saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake.

Mir. Have you not left off your impudent pretensions there yet? I shall cut your throat some time or other, Petulant, about that business.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that pass—there are other throats to be cut.

Mir. Meaning mine, sir?

Pet. Not I—I mean nobody—I know nothing:—but there are uncles and nephews in the world—and they may be rivals—what, then! All's one for that.

Mir. How! hark'ee, Petulant, come hither:—explain, or I shall call your interpreter.

Pet. Explain! I know nothing. Why, you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wishfort's?

Mir. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough—you and he are not friends; and if he should marry and have a child, you may be disinherited, ha?

Mir. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why, then, say I know something.

Mir. Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress, thou sha't, faith. What hast thou heard of my uncle?

Pet. I? Nothing, I. If throats are to be cut, let swords clash! snug's the word, I shrug and am silent.

Mir. Oh, raillery, raillery! Come, I know thou art in the women's secrets.—What, you're a cabalist; I know you stayed at Millamant's last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle or me? Tell me. If thou hadst but good nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwoud, who is now thy competitor in fame, would show as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he would no more be seen by thee, than Mercury is by the sun. Come, I'm sure thou wo't tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common sense then for the future?

Mir. Faith, I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heaven may grant it thee in the meantime.

Pet. Well, hark'ee.

[Mirabel *and* Petulant *talk apart.*

Fain. Petulant and you both will find Mirabel as warm a rival as a lover.

Wit. Pshaw! pshaw! that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part, but that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—hark'ee—to tell you a secret, but let it go no further—between friends, I shall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain woman.

Fain. I thought you had died for her.

Wit. Umh—no—

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow anybody else:—now, demme, I should hate that, if she were as handsome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her as he thinks for.

Fain. Why do you think so?

Wit. We stayed pretty late there last night, and heard something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town—and is between him and the best part of his estate. Mirabell and he are at some distance, as my Lady Wishfort has been told; and you know she hates Mirabell worse than a quaker hates a parrot, or than a fishmonger hates a hard frost. Whether this uncle has seen Mrs. Millamant or not, I cannot say, but there were items of such a treaty being in embryo; and if it should come to life, poor Mirabell would be in some sort unfortunately fobbed, i'faith.

Fain. 'Tis impossible Millamant should hearken to it.

Wit. Faith, my dear, I can't tell; she's a woman, and a kind of a humorist.

Mir. And this is the sum of what you could collect last night?

Pet. The quintessence. Maybe Witwoud knows more, he staid longer:—besides, they never mind him; they say anything before him.

Mir. I thought you had been the greatest favorite.

Pet. Ay, *tête-à-tête,* but not in public, because I make remarks.

Mir. You do?

Pet. Ay, ay; pox, I'm malicious, man! Now he's soft you know; they are not in awe of him—the fellow's well-bred; he's what you call a—what-d'ye-call-'em, a fine gentleman; but he's silly withal.

Mir. I thank you, I know as much as my curiosity requires.—Fainall, are you for the Mall?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park; the ladies talked of being there.

Mir. I thought you were obliged to watch for your brother Sir Wilfull's arrival.

Wit. No, no; he comes to his aunt's, my lady Wishfort. Pox on him! I shall be troubled with him, too; what shall I do with the fool?

Pet. Beg him for his estate, that I may beg you afterwards: and so have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. O, rare Petulant! Thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning: thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

Pet. Enough, I'm in a humor to be severe.

Mir. Are you? Pray, then, walk by yourselves: let not us be accessory to your putting the ladies out of countenance with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

Pet. What, what! Then let 'em either show their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else show their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

Mir. But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou oughtest to be most ashamed thyself, when thou hast put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand!—I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt, or ill breeding.

Mir. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I

ST. JAMES'S PARK.

MRS. FAINALL *and* MRS. MARWOOD.

Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves. Men are ever in extremes; either doting or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable; and when they cease to love (we ought to think at least) they loathe; they look upon us with horror and distaste; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as such, fly from us.

Mrs. Mar. True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us; and that the man so often should outlive the lover. But say what you will, 'tis better to be left than never to have been loved. To pass our youth in dull indifference, to refuse the sweets of life because they once must leave us, is as preposterous as to wish to have been born old, because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession.

Mrs. Fain. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind, only in compliance to my mother's humor?

Mrs. Mar. Certainly. To be free; I have no taste of those insipid dry discourses, with which our sex of force must entertain themselves, apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to dote like lovers; but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts; and every heart, or soon or late, receive and re-admit him as its lawful tyrant.

Mrs. Fain. Bless me, how have I been deceived! Why, you profess a libertine.

Mrs. Mar. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. Fain. Never!

Mrs. Mar. You hate mankind?

Mrs. Fain. Heartily, inveterately.

Mrs. Mar. Your husband?

Mrs. Fain. Most transcendently; ay, though I say it, meritoriously.

Mrs. Mar. Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs. Fain. There.

Mrs. Mar. I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs. Fain. Is it possible? Dost thou hate those vipers, men?

Mrs. Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs. Fain. There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilea!

Mrs. Mar. And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my aversion further.

Mrs. Fain. How?

Mrs. Mar. Faith, by marrying; if I could but find one that loved me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

Mrs. Fain. You would not make him a cuckold?

Mrs. Mar. No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs. Fain. Why, had not you as good do it?

Mrs. Mar. Oh! if he should ever discover it, he would then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but I would have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

Mrs. Fain. Ingenious mischief! would thou wert married to Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. Would I were!

Mrs. Fain. You change color.

Mrs. Mar. Because I hate him.

Mrs. Fain. So do I; but I can hear him named. But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. Mar. I never loved him; he is, and always was, insufferably proud.

Mrs. Fain. By the reason you give for your aversion, one would think it dissembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge, of which his enemies must acquit him.

Mrs. Mar. Oh, then it seems you are one of his favorable enemies! Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs. Fain. Do I? I think I am a little sick o' the sudden.

Mrs. Mar. What ails you?

Mrs. Fain. My husband. Don't you see him? He turned short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

Enter FAINALL *and* MIRABELL

Mrs. Mar. Ha! ha! ha! He comes opportunely for you.

Mrs. Fain. For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.

Fain. My dear!

Mrs. Fain. My soul!

Fain. You don't look well to-day, child.

Mrs. Fain. D'ye think so?

Mir. He is the only man that does, madam.

Mrs. Fain. The only man that would tell me so at least; and the only man from whom I could hear it without mortification.

Fain. O, my dear, I am satisfied of your tenderness; I know you cannot resent any-

thing from me; especially what is an effect of my concern.

Mrs. Fain. Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night; I would fain hear it out.

Mir. The persons concerned in that affair have yet a tolerable reputation.—I am afraid Mr. Fainall will be censorious.

Mrs. Fain. He has a humor more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the hearing of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr. Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both.

[*Exeunt* Mrs. Fainall *and* Mirabell.

Fain. Excellent creature! Well, sure if I should live to be rid of my wife, I should be a miserable man.

Mrs. Mar. Ay!

Fain. For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence, must put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes! Nothing remains when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like Alexander, when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

Mrs. Mar. Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. Faith, I think not.

Mrs. Mar. Pray let us; I have a reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs. Mar. Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you that I am tender of your honor?

Fain. You would intimate, then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my wife and him.

Mrs. Mar. I think she does not hate him to that degree she would be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

Mrs. Mar. It may be you are deceived.

Fain. It may be so. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs. Mar. What?

Fain. That I have been deceived, madam, and you are false.

Mrs. Mar. That I am false! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know I see through all your little arts.—Come, you both love him; and both have equally dissembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another have made you clash till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession reddening on your cheeks, and sparkling from your eyes.

Mrs. Mar. You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not. 'Twas for my ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife; that by permitting her to be engaged, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures; and take you oftener to my arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept?

Mrs. Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another, with love of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false! I challenge you to show an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance! the injuries you have done him are a proof: your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion? To undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant?

Mrs. Mar. My obligations to my lady urged me; I had professed a friendship to her; and could not see her easy nature so abused by that dissembler.

Fain. What, was it conscience, then? Professed a friendship! O, the pious friendships of the female sex!

Mrs. Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us or mutual faith to one another.

Fain. Ha! ha! ha! You are my wife's friend, too.

Mrs. Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me? Have I been false to her, through strict fidelity to you, and sacrificed my friendship to keep my love inviolate? And have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit? To you it should be meritorious, that I have been vicious: and do you reflect that guilt upon me, which should lie buried in your bosom?

Fain. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the slight account you once could make of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false, you urged it with deliberate malice! 'twas spoken in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you loved, you could forgive a jealousy: but you are stung to find you are discovered.

Mrs. Mar. It shall be all discovered. You too shall be discovered; be sure you shall. I can but be exposed.—If I do it myself I shall prevent your baseness.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs. Mar. Disclose it to your wife; own what has passed between us.

Fain. Frenzy!

Mrs. Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't!—

I'll publish to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame and fortune! With both I trusted you, you bankrupt in honor, as indigent of wealth.

Fain. Your fame I have preserved: your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared. Yet, had not you been false, I had ere this repaid it—'tis true—had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stolen their marriage, my lady had been incensed beyond all means of reconcilement: Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune; which then would have descended to my wife; and wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you?

Mrs. Mar. Deceit and frivolous pretence!

Fain. Death, am I not married? What's pretence? Am I not imprisoned, fettered? Have I not a wife? nay a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow; and would be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to bustle through the ways of wedlock and this world! Will you yet be reconciled to truth and me?

Mrs. Mar. Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent: I hate you, and shall for ever.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs. Mar. I loathe the name of love after such usage; and next to the guilt with which you would asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewell!

Fain. Nay, we must not part thus.

Mrs. Mar. Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Mar. I care not—let me go—break my hands, do—I'd leave 'em to get loose.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here?

Mrs. Mar. Well, I have deserved it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs. Mar. Poor dissembling!—Oh, that—well, it is not yet—

Fain. What? What is it not? What is it not yet? It is not yet too late—

Mrs. Mar. No, it is not yet too late;—I have that comfort.

Fain. It is, to love another.

Mrs. Mar. But not to loathe, detest, abhor mankind, myself, and the whole treacherous world.

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance.—Come, I ask your pardon—no tears—I was to blame, I could not love you and be easy in my doubts. Pray forbear—I believe you; I'm convinced I've done you wrong; and anyway, every way will make amends. I'll hate my wife yet more, damn her! I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, anywhere, to another world. I'll marry thee—be pacified.—'Sdeath they come, hide your face, your tears;—you have a mask, wear it a moment. This way, this way—be persuaded. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mirabell *and* Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. They are here yet.

Mir. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs. Fain. While I only hated my husband, I could bear to see him; but since I have despised him, he's too offensive.

Mir. O, you should hate with prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Yes, for I have loved with indiscretion.

Mir. You should have just so much disgust for your husband, as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.

Mrs. Fain. You have been the cause that I have loved without bounds, and would you set limits to that aversion of which you have been the occasion? Why did you make me marry this man?

Mir. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol, reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit, but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behavior have gained a reputation with the town enough to make that woman stand excused who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion; a worse had not answered to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

Mrs. Fain. I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

Mir. In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune.

Mrs. Fain. Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?

Mir. Waitwell, my servant.

Mrs. Fain. He is an humble servant to Foible my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

Mir. Care is taken for that—she is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs. Fain. Who?

Mir. Waitwell and Foible. I would not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in *The Fox*, stand upon terms; so I made him sure beforehand.

Mrs. Fain. So if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes, and release her by produc-

ing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage?

Mir. Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

Mrs. Fain. She talked last night of endeavoring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mir. That was by Foible's direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. Fain. Well, I have an opinion of your success; for I believe my lady will do anything to get an husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to anything to get rid of him.

Mir. Yes, I think the good lady would marry anything that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs. Fain. Female frailty! We must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite when the true is decayed.

Mir. An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl—'tis the green sickness of a second childhood; and, like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall, and withers in an affected bloom.

Mrs. Fain. Here's your mistress.

[*Enter* Mrs. Millamant, Witwoud, *and* Mincing.

Mir. Here she comes, i'faith, full sail, with her fan spread and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders; ha, no, I cry her mercy!

Mrs. Fain. I see but one poor empty sculler; and he tows her woman after him.

Mir. You seem to be unattended, madam —you used to have the *beau monde* throng after you; and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a candle.—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

Mrs. Mil. O, I have denied myself airs to-day, I have walked as fast through the crowd—

Wit. As a favorite just disgraced; and with as few followers.

Mrs. Mil. Dear Mr. Witwoud, truce with your similitudes; for I'm as sick of 'em—

Wit. As a physician of a good air.—I cannot help it, madam, though 'tis against myself.

Mrs. Mil. Yet, again! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a screen before a great fire.—I confess I do blaze to-day; I am too bright.

Mrs. Fain. But, dear Millamant, why were you so long?

Mrs. Mil. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haste; I have asked every living thing I met for you; I have inquired after you, as after a new fashion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes.—No, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mrs. Mil. By your leave, Witwoud, that were like inquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit! a hit! a palpable hit! I confess it.

Mrs. Fain. You were dressed before I came abroad.

Mrs. Mil. Ay, that's true.—O, but then I had—Mincing, what had I? Why was I so long?

Min. O mem, your la'ship stayed to peruse a packet of letters.

Mrs. Mil. O, ay, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—I hate letters.—Nobody knows how to write letters, and yet one has 'em, one does not know why. They serve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

Mrs. Mil. Only with those in verse, Mr. Witwoud; I never pin up my hair with prose. —I think I tried once, Mincing.

Min. O mem, I shall never forget it.

Mrs. Mil. Ay, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

Min. Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem: and all to no purpose. But when your la'ship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as anything, and is so pure and so crips.

Wit. Indeed, so crips?

Min. You're such a critic, Mr. Witwoud.

Mrs. Mil. Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night? O, ay, and went away.—Now I think on't I'm angry—no, now I think on't I'm pleased—for I believe I gave you some pain.

Mir. Does that please you?

Mrs. Mil. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mir. You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Mrs. Mil. Oh, I ask your pardon for that —one's cruelty is one's power; and when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mir. Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover—and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover; your beauty dies upon the instant; for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your charms —your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies,

yet after commendation can be flattered by it, and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises, rather than your face.

Mrs. Mil. Oh, the vanity of these men!—Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome! Now you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift!—Lord, what is a lover, that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases; and then, if one pleases, one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making so many card-matches.

Mrs. Mil. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an echo. They can but reflect what we look and say; vain empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

Mir. Yet to those two vain empty things you owe the two greatest pleasures of your life.

Mrs. Mil. How so?

Mir. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves praised; and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an echo must wait till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Mrs. Mil. Oh, fiction!—Fainall, let us leave these men.

Mir. Draw off Witwoud.

[*Aside to* Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. Immediately.—I have a word or two for Mr. Witwoud.

[*Exeunt* Mrs. Fainall *and* Witwoud.

Mir. I would beg a little private audience too.—You had the tyranny to deny me last night; though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love.

Mrs. Mil. You saw I was engaged.

Mir. Unkind! You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools; things who visit you from their excessive idleness; bestowing on your easiness that time which is the encumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they should admire you, they are not capable: or if they were, it should be to you as a mortification; for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Mrs. Mil. I please myself:—besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

Mir. Your health! Is there a worse disease than the conversion of fools?

Mrs. Mil. Yes, the vapors; fools are physic for it, next to assafœtida.

Mir. You are not in a course of fools?

Mrs. Mil. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom, you'll displease me.—I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you; we shan't agree.

Mir. Not in our physic, it may be.

Mrs. Mil. And yet our distemper, in all likelihood, will be the same; for we shall be sick of one another. I shan't endure to be reprimanded nor instructed: 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults—I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell,—I'm resolved—I think—you may go.—Ha! ha! ha! What would you give, that you could help loving me?

Mir. I would give something that you did not know I could not help it.

Mrs. Mil. Come, don't look grave, then. Well, what do you say to me?

Mir. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman with plain dealing and sincerity.

Mrs. Mil. Sententious Mirabell!—Prithee, don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.

Mir. You are merry, madam, but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

Mrs. Mil. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a love-sick face. Ha! ha! ha!—Well, I won't laugh, don't be peevish—Heigho! now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me woo me now.—Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well;—I see they are walking away.

Mir. Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment—

Mrs. Mil. To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed—no.

Mir. But how you came to know it—

Mrs. Mil. Without the help of the devil, you can't imagine; unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

[*Exit.*

Mir. I have something more.—Gone!—Think of you? To think of a whirlwind, though't were in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation; a very tranquillity of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill, nas not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turned; and by one as well as another; for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.—Oh, here come my pair of turtles!—What,

billing so sweetly! Is not Valentine's Day over with you yet?

Enter WAITWELL *and* FOIBLE.

Sirrah, Waitwell, why sure you think you were married for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency.

Wait. Your pardon, sir. With submission, we have indeed been solacing in lawful delights; but still with an eye to business, sir. I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way.

Mir. Give you joy, Mrs. Foible.

Foib. Oh, 'las, sir, I'm so ashamed!—I'm afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, sir, I made as much haste as I could.

Wait. That she did indeed, sir. It was my fault that she did not make more.

Mir. That I believe.

Foib. But I told my lady as you instructed me, sir, that I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland your uncle; and that I would put her ladyship's picture in my pocket to show him; which I'll be sure to say has made him so enamored of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lie at her ladyship's feet, and worship the original.

Mir. Excellent Foible! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

Wait. I think she has profited, sir, I think so.

Foib. You have seen Madam Millamant, sir?

Mir. Yes.

Foib. I told her, sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity; she had so much company last night.

Mir. Your diligence will merit more—in the meantime— [*Gives money.*

Foib. O dear sir, your humble servant!

Wait. Spouse.

Mir. Stand off, sir, not a penny!—Go on and prosper, Foible:—the lease shall be made good, and the farm stocked, if we succeed.

Foib. I don't question your generosity, sir: and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dress till I come.—O dear, I'm sure that [*Looking out*] was Mrs. Marwood that went by in a mask! If she has seen me with you I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your servant, sir.—B'w'y, Waitwell. [*Exit.*

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you please.—The jade's so pert upon her preferment she forgets herself.

Mir. Come, sir, will you endeavor to forget yourself, and transform into Sir Rowland?

Wait. Why, sir, it will be impossible I should remember myself.—Married, knighted, and attended all in one day! 'tis enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self, and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither; for now, I remember me, I'm married, and can't be my own man again.

Ay, there's my grief; that's the sad change of life,
To lose my title, and yet keep my wife.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I

A Room in LADY WISHFORT'S *House.*

LADY WISHFORT *at her toilet,* PEG *waiting.*

Lady Wish. Merciful! no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam.

Lady Wish. I have no more patience.—If I have not fretted myself till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me! Fetch me the red—the red, do you hear, sweetheart?—An arrant ash-color, as I am a person! Look you how this wench stirs!—Why dost thou not fetch me a little red? Didst thou not hear me, Mopus?

Peg. The red ratafia, does your ladyship mean, or the cherry-brandy?

Lady Wish. Ratafia, fool! No, fool. Not the ratafia, fool—grant me patience!—I mean the Spanish paper, idiot—complexion, darling. Paint, paint, paint, dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? Why dost thou not stir, puppet? Thou wooden thing upon wires!

Peg. Lord, madam, your ladyship is so impatient!—I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs. Foible has locked it up, and carried the key with her.

Lady Wish. A pox take you both!—Fetch me the cherry-brandy then. [*Exit* PEG.] I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. Qualmsick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding.—Wench, come, come, wench, what art thou doing? sipping, tasting?—Save thee, dost thou not know the bottle?

Re-enter PEG *with a bottle and china cup.*

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

Lady Wish. A cup, save thee! and what a cup hast thou brought!—Dost thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? Why didst thou not bring thy thimble? Hast thou ne'er a brass thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg?—I warrant

thee. Come, fill, fill! — So — again — [*One knocks.*]—See who that is.—Set down the bottle first—here, here, under the table.—What, wouldst thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapster? As I am a person, this wench has lived in an inn upon the road, before she came to me, like Maritornes the Asturian in Don Quixote!—No Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam; Mrs. Marwood.

Lady Wish. Oh, Marwood; let her come in.—Come in, good Marwood.

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. Mar. I'm surprised to find your ladyship in dishabille at this time of day.

Lady Wish. Foible's a lost thing; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs. Mar. I saw her but now, as I came masked through the park, in conference with Mirabell.

Lady Wish. With Mirabell!—You call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence! I sent her to negotiate an affair, in which, if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruined. O my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected.

Mrs. Mar. O madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. Foible's integrity!

Lady Wish. Oh, he carries poison in his tongue that would corrupt integrity itself! If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah, dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity?—Hark! I hear her!—dear friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom.—You'll pardon me, dear friend; I can make bold with you.—There are books over the chimney—Quarles and Prynne, and *The Short View of the Stage,* with Bunyan's works, to entertain you.—[*To* Peg.]—Go, you thing, and send her in. [*Exeunt* Mrs. Marwood *and* Peg.

Enter Foible.

Lady Wish. O Foible, where hast thou been? What hast thou been doing?

Foib. Madam, I have seen the party.

Lady Wish. But what hast thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your ladyship has done, and are to do; I have only promised. But a man so enamored—so transported!—Well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—poor Sir Rowland, I say.

Lady Wish. The miniature has been counted like;—but hast thou not betrayed me, Foible? Hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell?—What hadst thou to do with him in the Park? Answer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foib. [*Aside.*] So the devil has been beforehand with me. What shall I say?—[*Aloud.*]—Alas, madam, could I help it, if I met that confident thing? Was I in fault? If you had heard how he used me, and all upon your ladyship's account, I'm sure you would not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst, I could have borne; but he had a fling at your ladyship too; and then I could not hold; but i'faith I gave him his own.

Lady Wish. Me? What did the filthy fellow say?

Foib. O madam! 'tis a shame to say what he said—with his taunts and his fleers, tossing up his nose. Humph! (says he) what, you are a hatching some plot (says he), you are so early abroad, or catering (says he), ferreting for some disbanded officer, I warrant.—Half-pay is but thin subsistence (says he);—well, what pension does your lady propose? Let me see (says he), what, she must come down pretty deep now, she's superannuated (says he) and—

Lady Wish. Odds my life, I'll have him, I'll have him murdered! I'll have him poisoned! Where does he eat?—I'll marry a drawer to have him poisoned in his wine. I'll send for Robin from Locket's immediately.

Foib. Poison him! poisoning's too good for him. Starve him, madam, starve him: marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. Oh, you would bless yourself to hear what he said!

Lady Wish. A villain! Superannuated!

Foib. Humph (says he), I hear you are laying designs against me too (says he) and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle (he does not suspect a word of your ladyship); but (says he) I'll fit you for that. I warrant you (says he) I'll hamper you for that (says he); you and your old frippery too (says he); I'll handle you—

Lady Wish. Audacious villain! Handle me! would he durst!—Frippery! old frippery! Was there ever such a foul-mouthed fellow? I'll be married to-morrow, I'll be contracted to-night.

Foib. The sooner the better, madam.

Lady Wish. Will Sir Rowland be here, sayest thou? when, Foible?

Foib. Incontinently, madam. No new sheriff's wife expects the return of her husband after knighthood with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kissing your ladyship's hand after dinner.

Lady Wish. Frippery! superannuated frippery! I'll frippery the villain; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags! a tatterdemalion! I hope to see him hung with tatters, like a Long-Lane penthouse or a gibbet thief. A slander-mouthed railer! I warrant the

spendthrift prodigal's in debt as much as the million lottery, or the whole court upon a birthday. I'll spoil his credit with his tailor. Yes, he shall have my niece with her fortune, he shall.

Foib. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first, and angle into Blackfriars for brass farthings with an old mitten.

Lady Wish. Ay, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features to receive Sir Rowland with any economy of face. This wretch has fretted me that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

Foib. Your ladyship has frowned a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernible in the white varnish.

Lady Wish. Let me see the glass.—Cracks, sayest thou?—why, I am errantly flayed—I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture.

Foib. I warrant you, madam, a little art once made your picture like you; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

Lady Wish. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? Or will he not fail when he does come? Will he be importunate, Foible, and push? For if he should not be importunate, I shall never break decorums:—I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance.—Oh, no, I can never advance!—I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy, neither.—I won't give him despair—but a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.

Foib. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

Lady Wish. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—a sort of dyingness—you see that picture has a sort of a—ha, Foible! a swimmingness in the eye—yes, I'll look so—my niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be removed—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? Don't answer me. I won't know; I'll be surprised, I'll be taken by surprise.

Foib. By storm, madam, Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

Lady Wish. Is he! O, then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I shall save decorums if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums. O, I'm glad he's a brisk man. Let my things be removed, good Foible. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. O Foible, I have been in a fright, lest I should come too late! That devil Marwood saw you in the Park with Mirabell, and I'm afraid will discover it to my lady.

Foib. Discover what, madam!

Mrs. Fain. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face, I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and as such, winning my lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

Foib. O dear madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your ladyship that was deficient; but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladyship and Mr. Mirabell might have hindered his communicating this secret.

Mrs. Fain. Dear Foible, forget that.

Foib. O dear madam, Mr. Mirabell is such a sweet, winning gentleman—but your ladyship is the pattern of generosity.—Sweet lady, to be so good! Mr. Mirabell cannot choose but be grateful. I find your ladyship has his heart still. Now, madam, I can safely tell your ladyship our success; Mrs. Marwood had told my lady; but I warrant I managed myself; I turned it all for the better. I told my lady that Mr. Mirabell railed at her; I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my lady is so incensed that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, she says; I warrant I worked her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they say of a Welsh maidenhead.

Mrs. Fain. O rare Foible!

Foib. Madam, I beg your ladyship to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him: besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me.—She has a month's mind; but I know Mr. Mirabell can't abide her.—John!—[*Calls.*] remove my lady's toilet.—Madam, your servant: my lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me if I stay.

Mrs. Fain. I'll go with you up the backstairs, lest I should meet her. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I shall watch you. Why this wench is the *passe-partout,* a very master-key to everybody's strong-box. My friend Fainall, have you carried it so swimmingly? I thought there was something in it; but it seems 'tis over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite, then, but from a surfeit. Else you could

never be so cool to fall from a principal to be an assistant; to procure for him! A pattern of generosity that, I confess. Well, Mr. Fainall, you have met with your match.—O man, man! woman, woman, the devil's an ass: if I were a painter, I would draw him like an idiot, a driveller with a bib and bells: man should have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend!—"Madam Marwood has a month's mind, but he can't abide her."—'Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair, without you could have kept his counsel closer. I shall not prove another pattern of generosity: he has not obliged me to that with those excesses of himself! and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good lady, panting ripe; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chemist upon the day of projection.

Enter Lady Wishfort.

Lady Wish. O dear, Marwood, what shall I say for this rude forgetfulness?—but my dear friend is all goodness.

Mrs. Mar. No apologies, dear madam, I have been very well entertained.

Lady Wish. As I'm a person, I am in a very chaos to think I should so forget myself: but I have such an olio of affairs, really I know not what to do.—[*Calls.*] Foible!—I expect my nephew, Sir Wilfull, every moment too.—Why, Foible!—He means to travel for improvement.

Mrs. Mar. Methinks Sir Wilfull should rather think of marrying than travelling at his years. I hear he is turned of forty.

Lady Wish. O, he's in less danger of being spoiled by his travels—I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquired discretion to choose for himself.

Mrs. Mar. Methinks Mrs. Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards. 'Tis a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

Lady Wish. I promise you I have thought on't—and since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on't again. I assure you I will; I value your judgment extremely. On my word, I'll propose it.

Enter Foible.

Lady Wish. Come, come, Foible—I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner—I must make haste.

Foib. Mr. Witwoud and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladyship.

Lady Wish. O dear, I can't appear till I'm dressed.—Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em? I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me.

[*Exeunt* Lady Wish. *and* Foible.

Enter Mrs. Millamant *and* Mincing.

Mrs. Mil. Sure, never anything was so unbred as that odious man!—Marwood, your servant.

Mrs. Mar. You have a color; what's the matter?

Mrs. Mil. That horrid fellow, Petulant, has provoked me into a flame: I have broken my fan.—Mincing, lend me yours; is not all the powder out of my hair?

Mrs. Mar. No. What has he done?

Mrs. Mil. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talked—nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted everything that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwoud and he would have quarrelled.

Min. I vow, mem, I thought once they would have fit.

Mrs. Mil. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I swear, that one has not the liberty of choosing one's acquaintance as one does one's clothes.

Mrs. Mar. If we had that liberty, we should be as weary of one set of acquaintance, though never so good, as we are of one suit though never so fine. A fool and a doily stuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Mrs. Mil. I could consent to wear 'em, if they would wear alike; but fools never wear out—they are such *drap de Berri* things! Without one could give 'em to one's chambermaid after a day or two.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twere better so indeed. Or what think you of the playhouse? A fine gay glossy fool should be given there, like a new masking habit, after the masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you would but appear barefaced now, and own Mirabell, you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwoud as your hood and scarf. And indeed, 'tis time, for the town has found it; the secret is grown too big for the pretence. 'Tis like Mrs. Primly's great belly; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her hips. Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it than my Lady Strammel can her face; that goodly face, which in defiance of her Rhenish wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

Mrs. Mil. I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more censorious than a decayed beauty, or a discarded toast.—Mincing, tell the men they may come up.—My aunt is not dressing here; their folly is less provoking than your malice. [*Exit* Mincing.] The town has found it! what has it found? That Mirabell loves me is no more a secret than it is a secret that you discovered it to my

aunt, or than the reason why you discovered it is a secret.

Mrs. Mar. You are nettled.

Mrs. Mil. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan, if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

Mrs. Mil. O, silly! ha! ha! ha! I could laugh immoderately. Poor Mirabell! His constancy to me has quite destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside. I swear, I never enjoined it him to be so coy.—If I had the vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him to show more gallantry—'tis hardly well-bred to be so particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha! ha! ha! pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh, ha! ha! ha! though I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mar. What pity 'tis so much fine raillery, and delivered with so significant gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry!

Mrs. Mil. Ha? dear creature, I ask your pardon—I swear I did not mind you.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think it a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you—

Mrs. Mil. O dear, what? for it is the same thing if I hear it—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mar. That I detest him, hate him, madam.

Mrs. Mil. O madam, why, so do I—and yet the creature loves me, ha! ha! ha! How can one forebear laughing to think of it. —I am a sibyl if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer—and within a year or two as young—if you could but stay for me, I should overtake you—but that cannot be.—Well, that thought makes me melancholic.—Now, I'll be sad.

Mrs. Mar. Your merry note may be changed sooner than you think.

Mrs. Mil. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolved I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

Enter MINCING.

Min. The gentlemen stay but to comb, madam, and will wait on you.

Mrs. Mil. Desire Mrs. —— that is in the next room to sing the song I would have learned yesterday.—You shall hear it, madam —not that there's any great matter in it—but 'tis agreeable to my humor.

SONG

Set by MR. JOHN ECCLES.

Love's but the frailty of the mind,
When 'tis not with ambition joined;
A sickly flame, which, if not fed, expires,
And feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires.

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy
Or amorous youth, that gives the joy;
But 'tis the glory to have pierced a swain,
For whom inferior beauties sighed in vain.

Then I alone the conquest prize,
When I insult a rival's eyes:
If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart, which others bleed for, bleed for me.

Enter PETULANT *and* WITWOUD.

Mrs. Mil. Is your animosity composed, gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, raillery, madam; we have no animosity—we hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity.—The falling-out of wits is like the falling-out of lovers: we agree in the main, like treble and bass.—Ha, Petulant?

Pet. Ay, in the main—but when I have a humor to contradict—

Wit. Ay, when he has a humor to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battledores; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

Pet. If he says black's black—if I have a humor to say 'tis blue—let that pass—all's one for that. If I have a humor to prove it, it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must—but it may—it may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may.—That's a logical distinction now, madam.

Mrs. Mar. I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs. Mar. That's a sign indeed it's no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no, it's no enemy to anybody but them that have it.

Mrs. Mil. Well, an illiterate man's my aversion: I wonder at the impudence of any illiterate man to offer to make love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Mrs. Mil. Ah! to marry an ignorant that can hardly read or write!

Pet. Why should a man be any further from being married, though he can't read, than he is from being hanged? The ordinary's paid for setting the psalm, and the parish priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both cases,

a man may do it without book—so all's one for that.

Mrs. Mil. D'ye hear the creature?—Lord, here's company, I'll be gone.

[*Exeunt* MRS. MIL. *and* MINCING.

Enter SIR WILFULL WITWOUD *in a riding dress, followed by Footman.*

Wit. In the name of Bartlemew and his fair, what have we here?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I.—Yes, I think it is he—I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the Revolution.

Foot. [*To* SIR WILFULL.] Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company; if you please to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir Wil. Dressing! What, it's but morning here, I warrant, with you in London; we should count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropshire.—Why then, belike, my aunt han't dined yet, ha, friend?

Foot. Your aunt, sir?

Sir Wil. My aunt, sir! Yes, my aunt, sir, and your lady, sir; your lady is my aunt, sir.—Why, what dost thou not know me, friend? why then send somebody hither that does. How long hast thou lived with thy lady, fellow, ha?

Foot. A week, sir; longer than anybody in the house, except my lady's woman.

Sir Wil. Why then belike thou dost not know thy lady, if thou seest her, ha, friend?

Foot. Why, truly, sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in a morning, before she is dressed. 'Tis like I may give a shrewd guess at her by this time.

Sir Wil. Well, prithee try what thou canst do; if thou canst not guess, inquire her out, dost hear, fellow? and tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwoud, is in the house.

Foot. I shall, sir.

Sir Wil. Hold ye, hear me, friend; a word with you in your ear; prithee who are these gallants?

Foot. Really, sir, I can't tell; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all.

[*Exit.*

Sir Wil. Oons, this fellow knows less than a starling; I don't think a' knows his own name.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Witwoud, your brother is not behindhand in forgetfulness—I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope so—the devil take him that remembers first, I say.

Sir Wil. Save you, gentlemen and lady!

Mrs. Mar. For shame, Mr. Witwoud; why won't you speak to him?—And you, sir.

Wit. Petulant, speak.

Pet. And you, sir.

Sir Wil. No offence, I hope.

[*Salutes* MRS. MARWOOD.

Mrs. Mar. No, sure, sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence! ha! ha! ha! To him; to him, Petulant, smoke him.

Pet. It seems as if you had come a journey, sir; hem, hem.

[*Surveying him round.*

Sir Wil. Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

Pet. No offence, I hope, sir.

Wit. Smoke the boots, the boots; Petulant, the boots: ha! ha! ha!

Sir Wil. May be not, sir; thereafter, as 'tis meant, sir.

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

Sir Wil. Why, 'tis like you may, sir: if you are not satisfied with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may inquire further of my horse, sir.

Pet. Your horse, sir! your horse is an ass, sir!

Sir Wil. Do you speak by way of offence, sir?

Mrs. Mar. The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir.—[*Aside.*] S'life, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and an ass before they find one another out.—[*Aloud.*] You must not take anything amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends here, though it may be you don't know it.—If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

Sir Wil. Right, lady; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud, so I write myself; no offence to anybody, I hope; and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

Mrs. Mar. Don't you know this gentleman, sir?

Sir Wil. Hum! what, sure 'tis not—yea by'r Lady, but 'tis—s'heart, I know not whether 'tis or no—yea, but 'tis, by the Wrekin. Brother Anthony! what, Tony, i'faith! what, dost thou not know me? By'r Lady, nor I thee, thou art so becravated, and so beperiwigged.—S'heart, why dost not speak? art thou o'erjoyed?

Wit. Odso, brother, is it you? your servant, brother.

Sir Wil. Your servant! why yours, sir. Your servant again—s'heart, and your friend and servant to that—and a (*puff*) and a flap-dragon for your service, sir! and a hare's foot and a hare's scut for your service, sir! an you be so cold and so courtly.

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir Wil. S'heart, sir, but there is, and much offence!—A pox, is this your inns o' court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders and your betters?

Wit. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury-cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town: you think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of serjeants—'tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

Sir Wil. The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. S'heart, I've suspected this—by'r Lady, I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the style of your letters, and write on a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a *subpœna*. I might expect this when you left off, "Honored brother"; and "hoping you are in good health," and so forth—to begin with a "Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch"—'ods heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude.—You could write news before you were out of your time, when you lived with honest Pumple Nose the attorney of Furnival's Inn—you could entreat to be remembered then to your friends round the Wrekin. We could have gazettes, then, and Dawks's Letter, and the Weekly Bill, till of late days.

Pet. S'life, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? of the family of the Furnivals? Ha! ha! ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while: not long, not long. Pshaw! I was not in my own power then; an orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that, man, to come to London: he had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

Sir Wil. S'heart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops; where, I suppose, you have served your time; and now you may set up for yourself.

Mrs. Mar. You intend to travel, sir, as I'm informed.

Sir Wil. Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold.

Pet. And the wind serve.

Sir Wil. Serve or not serve, I shan't ask licence of you, sir; nor the weathercock your companion: I direct my discourse to the lady, sir.—'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam—yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. If an how that the peace holds, whereby that is, taxes abate.

Mrs. Mar. I thought you had designed for France at all adventures.

Sir Wil. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution—because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand shill I, shall I, then; if I say't, I'll do't; but I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of your lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

Mrs. Mar. Here's an academy in town for that use.

Sir Wil. There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mrs. Mar. No doubt you will return very much improved.

Wit. Yes, refined, like a Dutch skipper from a whale-fishing.

Enter Lady Wishfort *and* Fainall.

Lady Wish. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Fain. Sir Wilfull, your most faithful servant.

Sir Wil. Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

Lady Wish. Cousin Witwoud, your servant; Mr. Petulant, your servant—nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink anything after your journey, nephew; before you eat? dinner's almost ready.

Sir Wil. I'm very well, I thank you, aunt—however, I thank you for your courteous offer. S'heart I was afraid you would have been in the fashion too, and have remembered to have forgot your relations. Here's your cousin Tony, belike, I mayn't call him brother for fear of offence.

Lady Wish. Oh, he's a railleur, nephew—my cousin's a wit: and your great wits always rally their best friends to choose. When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better.

[Fainall *and* Mrs. Marwood *talk apart.*

Sir Wil. Why then let him hold his tongue in the mean time; and rail when that day comes.

Enter Mincing.

Min. Mem, I am come to acquaint your la'ship that dinner is impatient.

Sir Wil. Impatient! why then belike it won't stay till I pull off my boots.—Sweetheart, can you help me to a pair of slippers?—My man's with his horses, I warrant.

Lady Wish. Fy, fy, nephew! you would not pull off your boots here?—Go down into the hall—dinner shall stay for you.—My nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, madam.—Gentlemen, will you walk?—Marwood?

Mrs. Mar. I'll follow you, madam—before Sir Wilfull is ready.

[*Exeunt all but* Mrs. Marwood *and* Fainall.

Fain. Why then, Foible's a bawd, an errant, rank, match-making bawd: and I, it seems, am a husband, a rank husband; and my wife a very errant, rank wife—all in the

way of the world. 'Sdeath, to be a cuckold by anticipation, a cuckold in embryo! sure I was born with budding antlers, like a young satyr, or a citizen's child. .'Sdeath! to be out-witted—to be out-jilted—out-matrimony'd!—If I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat,—but to crawl after, with my horns, like a snail, and be outstripped by my wife—'tis scurvy wedlock.

Mrs. Mar. Then shake it off; you have often wished for an opportunity to part—and now you have it. But first prevent their plot—the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with, to a foe, to Mirabell.

Fain. Damn him! that had been mine—had you not made that fond discovery—that had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my horns by that increase of fortune; I could have worn 'em tipped with gold, though my forehead had been furnished like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

Mrs. Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her—I dare swear she had given up her game before she was married.

Fain. Hum! that may be.

Mrs. Mar. You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The means, the means.

Mrs. Mar. Discover to my lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her!—my lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enraged beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece, and fortune, and all, at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith, this has an appearance.

Mrs. Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavor a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfull; that may be an obstacle.

Fain. Oh, for that matter, leave me to manage him: I'll disable him for that; he will drink like a Dane; after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

Mrs. Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards your lady?

Fain. Why, faith, I'm thinking of it.—Let me see—I am married already, so that's over:—my wife has played the jade with me—well, that's over too:—I never loved her, or if I had, why that would have been over too by this time:—jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy:—weary of her I am, and shall be—no, there's no end of that—no, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose; now for my reputation. As to my own, I married not for it, so that's out of the question;—and as to my part in my wife's—why, she had parted with hers before; so bringing none to me, she can take none from me; 'tis against all rule of play, that I should lose to one who has not wherewithal to stake.

Mrs. Mar. Besides, you forget, marriage is honorable.

Fain. Hum, faith, and that's well thought on; marriage is honorable as you say; and if so, wherefore should cuckoldom be a discredit, being derived from so honorable a root?

Mrs. Mar. Nay, I know not; if the root be honorable, why not the branches?

Fain. So, so, why this point's clear—well, how do we proceed?

Mrs. Mar. I will contrive a letter which shall be delivered to my lady at the time when that rascal who is to act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand—for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provoked if I could help it—because you know she knows some passages—nay, I expect all will come out—but let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discovered.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst—I'll turn my wife to grass—I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate, which I wheedled out of her; and that you shall partake at least.

Mrs. Mar. I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell now; you'll be no more jealous?

Fain. Jealous! no—by this kiss—let husbands be jealous; but let the lover still believe; or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his mistress true. But let husbands' doubts convert to endless jealousy; or if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll disown the order. And since I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common crest:—

All husbands must or pain or shame endure;
The wise too jealous are, fools too secure.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Scene Continues.

Enter LADY WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

Lady Wish. Is Sir Rowland coming, sayest thou, Foible? And are things in order?

Foib. Yes, madam, I have put wax lights in the sconces, and placed the footmen in a row in the hall, in their best liveries, with the coachman and postillion to fill up the equipage.

Lady Wish. Have you pulvilled the coachman and postillion, that they may not stink of the stable when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foib. Yes, madam.

Lady Wish. And are the dancers and the music ready, that he may be entertained in all points with correspondence to his passion?

Foib. All is ready, madam.

Lady Wish. And—well—and how do I look, Foible?

Foib. Most killing well, madam.

Lady Wish. Well, and how shall I receive him? in what figure shall I give his heart the first impression? there is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit?—no, I won't sit—I'll walk—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him—no, that will be too sudden. I'll lie,—ay, I'll lie down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room, there's a couch—yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch.—I won't lie neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow: with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way—yes—and then as soon as he appears, start, ay, start and be surprised, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder—yes,—O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch, in some confusion:—it shows the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and recomposing airs beyond comparison. Hark! there's a coach.

Foib. 'Tis he, madam.

Lady Wish. Oh, dear!—Has my nephew made his addresses to Millamant? I ordered him.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is set in to drinking, madam, in the parlor.

Lady Wish. Odds my life, I'll send him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go—when they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland.

[*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Millamant *and* Mrs. Fainall.

Foib. Madam, I stayed here, to tell your ladyship that Mr. Mirabell has waited this half hour for an opportunity to talk with you: though my lady's orders were to leave you and Sir Wilfull together. Shall I tell Mr. Mirabell that you are at leisure?

Mrs. Mil. No,—what would the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself—bid him come another time.

"There never yet was woman made
Nor shall, but to be cursed."

[*Repeating, and walking about.*

That's hard!

Mrs. Fain. You are very fond of Sir John Suckling to-day, Millamant, and the poets.

Mrs. Mil. He? Ay, and filthy verses—so I am.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is coming, madam. Shall I send Mr. Mirabell away?

Mrs. Mil. Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away—or send him hither—just as you will, dear Foible.—I think I'll see him—shall I? Ay, let the wretch come. [*Exit* Foible.

"Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train."

[*Repeating.*

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull—thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool, thou art married and hast patience—I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs. Fain. I am obliged to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.

Enter Sir Wilfull.

Mrs. Fain. O Sir Wilfull, you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point now or never.

Sir Wil. Yes; my aunt will have it so—I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first before I am acquainted.—[*This while* Millamant *walks about repeating to herself.*]—But I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind—that is, upon further acquaintance—so for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave—if so be you'll be so kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my company—

Mrs. Fain. O, fy, Sir Wilfull! What, you must not be daunted.

Sir Wil. Daunted! no, that's not it, it is not so much for that—for if so be that I set on't, I'll do't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient till further acquaintance, that's all—your servant.

Mrs. Fain. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favorable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door.

[*Exit.*

Sir Wil. Nay, nay, cousin—I have forgot my gloves—what d'ye do?—S'heart, a'has locked the door indeed, I think—nay, Cousin Fainall, open the door—pshaw, what a vixen trick is this?—Nay, now a'has seen me too.—Cousin, I made bold to pass through as it were—I think this door's enchanted!

Mrs. Mil. [*Repeating.*]

"I prithee spare me, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy."

Sir Wil. Anan? Cousin, your servant.

Mrs. Mil. [*Repeating.*]

"That foolish trifle of a heart."

Sir Wilfull!

Sir Wil. Yes—your servant. No offence, I hope, cousin.

Mrs. Mil. [*Repeating.*]

"I swear it will not do its part,
Though thou dost thine, employest thy power and art."

Natural, easy Suckling!

Sir Wil. Anan? Suckling! no such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling: I thank Heaven, I'm no minor.

Mrs. Mil. Ah, rustic, ruder than Gothic!

Sir Wil. Well, well, I shall understand your lingo one of these days, cousin; in the meanwhile I must answer in plain English.

Mrs. Mil. Have you any business with me, Sir Wilfull?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin—yes, I make bold to see, to come and know if that how you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening, if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have sought a walk with you.

Mrs. Mil. A walk! what then?

Sir Wil. Nay, nothing—only for the walk's sake, that's all.

Mrs. Mil. I nauseate walking; 'tis a country diversion; I loathe the country, and everything that relates to it.

Sir Wil. Indeed! ha! Look ye, look ye, you do? Nay, 'tis like you may—here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like; that must be confessed indeed.

Mrs. Mil. *Ah, l'étourdi!* I hate the town too.

Sir Wil. Dear heart, that's much—ha! that you should hate 'em both! Ha! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country—'tis like you may be one of those, cousin.

Mrs. Mil. Ha! ha! ha! yes, 'tis like I may.—You have nothing further to say to me?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin.—'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private—I may break my mind in some measure—I conjecture you partly guess—however, that's as time shall try—but spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say.

Mrs. Mil. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me to leave me; I have just now a little business—

Sir Wil. Enough, enough, cousin: yes, yes, all a case—when you're disposed: now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now. All's one for that—yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it will keep cold, as they say.—Cousin, your servant—I think this door's locked.

Mrs. Mil. You may go this way, sir.

Sir Wil. Your servant; then with your leave I'll return to my company. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Mil. Ay, ay; ha! ha! ha!

"Like Phœbus sung the no less amorous boy."

Enter MIRABELL.

Mir. "Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy." Do you lock yourself up from me, to make my search more curious? or is this pretty artifice contrived to signify that here the chase must end, and my pursuit be crowned? For you can fly no further.

Mrs. Mil. Vanity! no—I'll fly, and be followed to the last moment. Though I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, nay, and afterwards.

Mir. What, after the last?

Mrs. Mil. Oh, I should think I was poor and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduced to an inglorious ease, and freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation.

Mir. But do not you know, that when favors are conferred upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure?

Mrs. Mil. It may be in things of common application; but never sure in love. Oh, I hate a lover that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature, as the saucy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantic arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatical an air. Ah! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

Mir. Would you have 'em both before marriage? or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other till after grace?

Mrs. Mil. Ah! don't be impertinent.—My dear liberty, shall I leave thee? my faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ay-h adieu—my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils du matin*, adieu?—I can't do't, 'tis more than impossible—positively, Mirabell, I'll lie abed in a morning as long as I please.

Mir. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

Mrs. Mil. Ah! idle creature, get up when you will—and d'ye hear, I won't be called names after I'm married; positively I won't be called names.

Mir. Names!

Mrs. Mil. Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar—I shall never bear that—good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler and Sir Francis: nor go to Hyde Park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers,

and then never be seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well-bred: let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while; and as well-bred as if we were not married at all.

Mir. Have you any more conditions to offer? Hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.

Mrs. Mil. Trifles!—As liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please; and choose conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance: or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please; dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humor, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

Mir. Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account.—Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband?

Mrs. Mil. You have free leave; propose your utmost, speak and spare not.

Mir. I thank you.—*Imprimis* then, I covenant, that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn confidant, or intimate of your own sex; no she-friend to screen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecy. No decoy-duck to wheedle you a fop-scrambling to the play in a mask—then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out—and rail at me for missing the play, and disappointing the frolic which you had to pick me up, and prove my constancy.

Mrs. Mil. Detestable *imprimis!* I go to the play in a mask!

Mir. Item, I article, that you continue to like your own face, as long as I shall: and while it passes current with me, that you endeavor not to new-coin it. To which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oiled-skins, and I know not what—hogs' bones, hares' gall, pig-water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in what-d'ye-call-it court. *Item,* I shut my doors against all bawds with baskets, and pennyworths of muslin, china, fans, atlases, etc.—*Item,* when you shall be breeding—

Mrs. Mil. Ah! name it not.

Mir. Which may be presumed with a blessing on our endeavors—

Mrs. Mil. Odious endeavors!

Mir. I denounce against all strait lacing, squeezing for a shape, till you mould my boy's head like a sugar-loaf, and instead of a man-child, make me father to a crooked billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea-table I submit—but with proviso, that you exceed not in your province; but restrain yourself to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee: as likewise to genuine and authorized tea-table talk—such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth—but that on no account you encroach upon the men's prerogative, and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows; for prevention of which I banish all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all aniseed, cinnamon, citron, and Barbadoes waters, together with ratafia, and the most noble spirit of clary—but for cowslip wine, poppy water, and all dormitives, those I allow.—These provisos admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

Mrs. Mil. O horrid provisos! filthy strong-waters! I toast fellows! odious men! I hate your odious provisos.

Mir. Then we are agreed! Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? And here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Mil. Fainall, what shall I do? shall I have him? I think I must have him.

Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, take him, take him, what should you do?

Mrs. Mil. Well then—I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright—Fainall, I shall never say it—well—I think—I'll endure you.

Mrs. Fain. Fy! fy! have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms: for I am sure you have a mind to him.

Mrs. Mil. Are you? I think I have—and the horrid man looks as if he thought so too—well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kissed, nor I won't be thanked—here kiss my hand though.—So, hold your tongue now, don't say a word.

Mrs. Fain. Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience; you have neither time to talk nor stay. My mother is coming; and in my conscience if she should see you, would fall into fits, and maybe not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your ecstasies for an-

other occasion, and slip down the backstairs, where Foible waits to consult you.

Mrs. Mil. Ay, go, go. In the meantime I suppose you have said something to please me.

Mir. I am all obedience. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fain. Yonder Sir Wilfull's drunk, and so noisy that my mother has been forced to leave Sir Rowland to appease him; but he answers her only with singing and drinking—what they may have done by this time I know not; but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Mrs. Mil. Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing, for I find I love him violently.

Mrs. Fain. So it seems; for you mind not what's said to you.—If you doubt him, you had best take up with Sir Wilfull.

Mrs. Mil. How can you name that superannuated lubber? foh!

Enter Witwoud *from drinking,*

Mrs. Fain. So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I could stay no longer—I have laughed like ten christenings—I am tipsy with laughing—if I had stayed any longer I should have burst—I must have been let out and pieced in the sides like an unsized camlet.—Yes, yes, the fray is composed; my lady came in like a *noli prosequi,* and stopped the proceedings.

Mrs. Mil. What was the dispute?

Wit. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage, and so fell a sputtering at one another like two roasting apples.

Enter Petulant, *drunk.*

Wit. Now, Petulant, all's over, all's well. Gad, my head begins to whim it about—why dost thou not speak? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

Pet. Look you, Mrs. Millamant—if you can love me, dear nymph—say it—and that's the conclusion—pass on, or pass off—that's all.

Wit. Thou hast uttered volumes, folios, in less than *decimo sexto,* my dear Lacedemonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwoud—you are an annihilator of sense.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phrases; and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pincushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of shorthand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one-half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the rest.—A Gemini of asses split would make just four of you.

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard seed; kiss me for that.

Pet. Stand off!—I'll kiss no more males—I have kissed your twin yonder in a humor of reconciliation, till he [*Hiccups*] rises upon my stomach like a radish.

Mrs. Mil. Eh! filthy creature! what was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel—there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have expressed provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Mrs. Mil. Me!

Pet. If I have a humor to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises.—If you are not handsome, what then, if I have a humor to prove it? If I shall have my reward, say so; if not, fight for your face the next time yourself—I'll go sleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thyself up like a wood-louse, and dream revenge—and hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge.—I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider!—Go flea dogs, and read romances!—I'll go to bed to my maid. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fain. He's horridly drunk.—How came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot! a plot! to get rid of the night—your husband's advice; but he sneaked off.

Enter Sir Wilfull *drunk,* Lady Wishfort.

Lady Wish. Out upon't, out upon't! At years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate!

Sir Wil. No offence, aunt.

Lady Wish. Offence! as I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you—foh! how you stink of wine! D'ye think my niece will ever endure such a Borachio! you're an absolute Borachio.

Sir Wil. Borachio?

Lady Wish. At a time when you should commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost—

Sir Wit. S'heart, an you grutch me your liquor, make a bill—give me more drink, and take my purse.— [*Sings.*

"Prithee fill me the glass,
Till it laugh in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow;
He that whines for a lass,
Is an ignorant ass,
For a bumper has not its fellow."

But if you would have me marry my cousin—say the word, and I'll do't—Wilfull will do't, that's the word—Willfull will do't, that's my crest—my motto I have forgot.

Lady Wish. My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin—but 'tis with drinking your health.—O' my word you are obliged to him.

Sir Wil. In vino veritas, aunt.—If I drunk your health to-day, cousin—I am a Borachio. But if you have a mind to be married, say the word, and send for the piper; Wilfull will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round.—Tony!—Odds heart, where's Tony!—Tony's an honest fellow; but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault.— [*Sings.*

"We'll drink, and we'll never ha' done, boys,
Put the glass then around with the sun, boys,
Let Apollo's example invite us;
For he's drunk every night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us."

The sun's a good pimple, an honest soaker; he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes.—Your Antipodes are a good, rascally sort of topsy-turvy fellows: if I had a bumper, I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to 'em.—A match or no match, cousin with the hard name?—Aunt, Wilfull will do't. If she has her maidenhead, let her look to't; if she has not, let her keep her own counsel in the meantime, and cry out at the nine months' end.

Mrs. Mil. Your pardon, madam, I can stay no longer—Sir Wilfull grows very powerful. Eh! how he smells! I shall be overcome, if I stay.—Come, cousin.

[*Exeunt* Mrs. Millamant *and* Mrs. Fainall.

Lady Wish. Smells! He would poison a tallow-chandler and his family! Beastly creature, I know not what to do with him!—Travel, quotha! ay, travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks!—for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly pagan!

Sir Wil. Turks, no; no Turks, aunt: your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape. Your Mahometan, your Mussulman, is a dry stinkard—no offence, aunt. My map says that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian. I cannot find by the map that your Mufti is orthodox—whereby it is a plain case, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and [*Hiccups*] Greek for claret.—[*Sings.*

"To drink is a Christian diversion,
Unknown to the Turk or the Persian:
Let Mahometan fools
Live by heathenish rules,
And be damned over tea-cups and coffee.
But let British lads sing,
Crown a health to the king,
And a fig for your sultan and sophy!"

Ah, Tony!

Enter Foible, *who whispers to* Lady Wishfort.

Lady Wish. [*Aside to* Foible.]—Sir Rowland impatient? Good lack! what shall I do with this beastly tumbril?—[*Aloud.*] Go lie down and sleep, you sot!—or, as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinadoed with broomsticks.—Call up the wenches with broomsticks.

Sir Wil. Ahey! wenches, where are the wenches?

Lady Wish. Dear Cousin Witwoud, get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation—you will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit. Come, knight.—Pox on him, I don't know what to say to him.—Will you go to a cock-match?

Sir Wil. With a wench, Tony! Is she a shakebag, sirrah? Let me bite your cheek for that.

Wit. Horrible! he has a breath like a bagpipe!—Ay, ay; come, will you march, my Salopian?

Sir Wil. Lead on, little Tony—I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tantony, sirrah, thou shalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy pig.

"And a fig for your sultan and sophy."

[*Exeunt* Sir Wilfull *and* Witwoud.

Lady Wish. This will never do. It will never make a match—at least before he has been abroad.

Enter Waitwell, *disguised as* Sir Rowland.

Lady Wish. Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness!—I have more pardons to ask than the pope distributes in the year of jubilee. But I hope, where there is likely to be so near an alliance, we may unbend the severity of decorums, and dispense with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, madam, is the effect of my transport; and till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantalized on the rack; and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation.

Lady Wish. You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland, and press things to a conclusion with a most prevailing vehemence.—But a day or two for decency of marriage—

Wait. For decency of funeral, madam! The delay will break my heart—or, if that should fail, I shall be poisoned. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me—and I would willingly starve him before I die—I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction.—That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be revenged on that unnatural viper!

Lady Wish. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly I would contribute much both to the saving of your life, and the accomplishment

of your revenge.—Not that I respect myself, though he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady Wish. O Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and the tremblings, the ardors and the ecstasies, the kneelings and the risings, the heart-heavings and the handgripings, the pangs and the pathetic regards of his protesting eyes!—Oh, no memory can register!

Wait. What, my rival! is the rebel my rival?—a' dies.

Lady Wish. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland, starve him gradually, inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be barefoot; in a month out at knees with begging an alms.—He shall starve upward and upward, till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink like a candle's end upon a save-all.

Lady Wish. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way—you are no novice in the labyrinth of love—you have the clue.—But as I am a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or indigestion of widowhood; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of continence—I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials—

Wait. Far be it from me—

Lady Wish. If you do, I protest I must recede—or think that I have made a prostitution of decorums; but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance—

Wait. I esteem it so.

Lady Wish. Or else you wrong my condescension.

Wait. I do not, I do not!

Lady Wish. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair shrine of virtue!

Lady Wish. If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient,—

Wait. Dear madam, no. You are all camphor and frankincense, all chastity and odor.

Lady Wish. Or that—

Enter Foible.

Foib. Madam, the dancers are ready; and there's one with a letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

Lady Wish. Sir Rowland, will you give me leave? Think favorably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honor's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly. [*Exit.*

Wait. Fy, fy!—What a slavery have I undergone! Spouse, hast thou any cordial? I want spirits.

Foib. What a washy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and swearing to a fine lady!

Wait. Oh, she is the antidote to desire! Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't—I shall have no appetite to iteration of nuptials this eight-and-forty hours.—By this hand I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days—than act Sir Rowland till this time to-morrow!

Enter Lady Wishfort, *with a letter.*

Lady Wish. Call in the dancers.—Sir Rowland, we'll sit, if you please, and see the entertainment. [*Dance.*] Now, with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter.—I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasy. If it should make you uneasy, I would burn it.—Speak, if it does—but you may see the superscription is like a woman's hand.

Foib. By Heaven! Mrs. Marwood's, I know it.—My heart aches—get it from her. [*To him.*

Wait. A woman's hand! no, madam, that's no woman's hand, I see that already. That's somebody whose throat must be cut.

Lady Wish. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a return, by a frank communication.—You shall see it—we'll open it together—look you here.—[*Reads.*]—"Madam, though unknown to you"—Look you there, 'tis from nobody that I know—"I have that honor for your character, that I think myself obliged to let you know you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland, is a cheat and a rascal."—Oh, Heavens! what's this?

Foib. [*Aside.*] Unfortunate! all's ruined!

Wait. How, how, let me see, let me see!—[*Reading.*] "A rascal, and disguised and suborned for that imposture,"—O villainy! O villainy!—"by the contrivance of—"

Lady Wish. I shall faint, I shall die, oh!

Foib. Say 'tis your nephew's hand—quickly, his plot, swear, swear it! [*To him.*

Wait. Here's a villain! Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you see it?

Lady Wish. Too well, too well! I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand.—A woman's hand! The rascal writes a sort of a large hand; your Roman hand—I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him!

Foib. O treachery!—But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing?

Wait. Sure! am I here? Do I live? Do I love this pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him in the same character.

Lady Wish. How!

Foib. Oh, what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture!—This

was the business that brought Mr. Mirabell disguised to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me and would have hid his face.

Lady Wish. How, how!—I heard the villain was in the house indeed; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilfull was to have made his addresses.

Foib. Then, then, madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber! but I would not tell your ladyship to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough, his date is short.

Foib. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause.—My lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, though it cost me my life.

Lady Wish. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight; if you should be killed I must never show my face; or hanged—O, consider my reputation, Sir Rowland!—No, you shan't fight—I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight.

Wait. I am charmed, madam, I obey. But some proof you must let me give you; I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

Lady Wish. Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort, bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract to be signed this night? may I hope so far?

Lady Wish. Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive. Oh, this is a happy discovery!

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come—and married we will be in spite of treachery; ay, and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandoned nephew. Come, my buxom widow:

Ere long you shall substantial proofs receive,
That I'm an arrant knight—

Foib. [*Aside.*] Or arrant knave.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I

Scene Continues.

Lady Wishfort *and* Foible.

Lady Wish. Out of my house, out of my house, thou viper! thou serpent, that I have fostered! thou bosom traitress, that I raised from nothing!—Begone! begone! begone!—go! go!—That I took from washing of old gauze and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose over a chafing-dish of starved embers, and dining behind a traverse rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage!—Go, go! starve again, do, do!

Foib. Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

Lady Wish. Away! out! out!—Go, set up for yourself again!—Do, drive a trade, do, with your three-pennyworth of small ware, flaunting upon a packthread, under a brandy-seller's bulk, or against a dead wall by a ballad-monger! Go, hang out an old Frisoneer gorget, with a yard of yellow colbertine again! Do; an old gnawed mask, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle; a glass necklace with the beads broken, and a quilted night-cap with one ear! Go, go, drive a trade!—These were your commodities, you treacherous trull! this was the merchandise you dealt in when I took you into my house, placed you next myself, and made you governante of my whole family! You have forgot this, have you, now you have feathered your nest?

Foib. No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me, have but a moment's patience, I'll confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduced me; I am not the first that he has wheedled with his dissembling tongue; your ladyship's own wisdom has been deluded by him; then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? O madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assured me your ladyship should come to no damage!—Or else the wealth of the Indies should not have bribed me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me.

Lady Wish. No damage! What, to betray me, to marry me to a cast servingman! to make me a receptacle, an hospital for a decayed pimp! No damage! O thou frontless impudence, more than a big-bellied actress!

Foib. Pray, do but hear me, madam; he could not marry your ladyship, madam.—No, indeed, his marriage was to have been void in law, for he was married to me first, to secure your ladyship. He could not have bedded your ladyship; for if he had consummated with your ladyship, he must have run the risk of the law, and been put upon his clergy.—Yes, indeed, I inquired of the law in that case before I would meddle or make.

Lady Wish. What, then, I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems!—While you were catering for Mirabell, I have been broker for you! What, have you made a passive bawd of me?—This exceeds all precedent; I am brought to fine uses, to become a botcher of second-hand marriages between Abigails and Andrews!—I'll couple you!—Yes, I'll baste you together, you and your Philander! I'll

Duke's-place you, as I'm a person! Your turtle is in custody already: you shall coo in the same cage, if there be a constable or warrant in the parish. [*Exit.*

Foib. Oh, that ever I was born! Oh, that I was ever married!—A bride!—ay, I shall be a Bridewell-bride.—Oh!

Enter Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. Poor Foible, what's the matter?

Foib. O madam, my lady's gone for a constable. I shall be had to a justice, and put to Bridewell to beat hemp. Poor Waitwell's gone to prison already.

Mrs. Fain. Have a good heart, Foible; Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

Foib. Yes, yes; I know it, madam: she was in my lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my lady; and that missing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers; and in the meantime Mrs. Marwood declared all to my lady.

Mrs. Fain. Was there no mention made of me in the letter? My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy? I fancy Marwood has not told her, though she has told my husband.

Foib. Yes, madam; but my lady did not see that part; we stifled the letter before she read so far.—Has that mischievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladyship, then?

Mrs. Fain. Ay, all's out—my affair with Mirabell—everything discovered. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort.

Foib. Indeed, madam; and so 'tis a comfort if you knew all;—he has been even with your ladyship, which I could have told you long enough since, but I love to keep peace and quietness by my goodwill. I had rather bring friends together, than set 'em at distance: but Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs. Fain. Sayest thou so, Foible? Canst thou prove this?

Foib. I can take my oath of it, madam; so can Mrs. Mincing. We have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening when you were at Hyde Park; and we were thought to have gone a-walking, but we went up unawares;—though we were sworn to secrecy, too. Madam Marwood took a book and swore us upon it, but it was but a book of poems. So long as it was not a bible-oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

Mrs. Fain. This discovery is the most opportune thing I could wish.—Now, Mincing!

Enter Mincing.

Min. My lady would speak with Mrs. Foible, mem. Mr. Mirabell is with her; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my lady's closet till my old lady's anger is abated. Oh, my old lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has said; he swears, and my old lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, mem, how that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

Mrs. Fain. Does your lady or Mirabell know that?

Min. Yes, mem; they have sent me to see if Sir Wilfull be sober, and to bring him to them. My lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pounds.—Oh, come, Mrs. Foible, I hear my old lady.

Mrs. Fain. Foible, you must tell Mincing that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, madam.

Min. Oh, yes, mem, I'll vouch anything for your ladyship's service, be what it will. [*Exeunt* Mincing *and* Foible.

Enter Lady Wishfort, *and* Mrs. Marwood.

Lady Wish. Oh, my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness! To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell; to you I owe the detection of the impostor Sir Rowland. And now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honor of my house, and compound for the frailities of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to deserts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves and be shepherdesses.

Mrs. Mar. Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, madam. We shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

Lady Wish. Oh, daughter, daughter! is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and, as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the most minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mould of virtue? I have not only been a mould but a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world.

Mrs. Fain. I don't understand your ladyship.

Lady Wish. Not understand! Why, have

you not been naught? have you not been sophisticated? Not understand! here I am ruined to compound for your caprices and your cuckoldoms. I must pawn my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough—

Mrs. Fain. I am wronged and abused, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, as false as hell, as false as your friend there, ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mrs. Mar. My friend, Mrs. Fainall! your husband my friend! what do you mean?

Mrs. Fain. I know what I mean, madam, and so do you; and so shall the world at a time convenient.

Mrs. Mar. I am sorry to see you so passionate, madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladyship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair in which I am not personally concerned.

Lady Wish. O dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns!—[*To* Mrs. Fainall.] You ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature! she deserves more from you than all your life can accomplish.—[*To* Mrs. Marwood.] Oh, don't leave me destitute in this perplexity!—no, stick to me, my good genius.

Mrs. Fain. I tell you, madam, you're abused.—Stick to you! ay, like a leech, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. I defy 'em all. Let 'em prove their aspersions; I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial. [*Exit.*

Lady Wish. Why, if she should be innocent, if she should be wronged after all, ha?—I don't know what to think;—and I promise you her education has been unexceptionable—I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men: ay, friend, she would ha' shrieked if she had but seen a man, till she was in her teens. As I'm a person 'tis true;—she was never suffered to play with a male child, though but in coats; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender. Oh, she never looked a man in the face but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments, and his sleek face, till she was going in her fifteen.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twas much she should be deceived so long.

Lady Wish. I warrant you, or she would never have borne to have been catechized by him; and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and profane music-meetings, where the lewd trebles squeak nothing but bawdy, and the basses roar blasphemy. Oh, she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book!—and can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore? and thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a playhouse! O dear friend, I can't believe it, no, no! As she says, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs. Mar. Prove it, madam! What, and have your name prostituted in a public court! Yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers! To be ushered in with an *O yes* of scandal; and have your case opened by an old fumbling lecher in a quoif like a man-midwife; to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punsters and quibblers by the statute; and become a jest against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record—not even in doomsday-book; to discompose the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin; while the good judge, tickled with the proceeding, simpers under a grey beard, and fidgets off and on his cushion as if he had swallowed cantharides, or sat upon cow-itch!—

Lady Wish. Oh, 'tis very hard!

Mrs. Mar. And then to have my young revellers of the Temple take notes, like 'prentices at a conventicle; and after talk it over again in commons, or before drawers in an eating-house.

Lady Wish. Worse and worse!

Mrs. Mar. Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it must, after this, be consigned by the shorthand writers to the public press; and from thence be transferred to the hands, nay into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounder-man's: and this you must hear till you are stunned; nay, you must hear nothing else for some days.

Lady Wish. Oh, 'tis insupportable! No, no, dear friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, myself and my all, my niece and her all—anything, everything for composition.

Mrs. Mar. Nay, madam, I advise nothing, I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniences which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. Fainall; if he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you.

Enter Fainall.

Lady Wish. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood; no, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, madam; I have suffered myself to be overcome by the importunity of this lady your friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life, on condition you oblige yourself never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

Lady Wish. Never to marry!

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands; the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs. Mar. That condition, I dare answer, my lady will consent to without difficulty; she has already but too much experienced the perfidiousness of men.—Besides, madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

Lady Wish. Ay, that's true; but in case of necessity, as of health, or some such emergency—

Fain. Oh, if you are prescribed marriage, you shall be considered; I will only reserve to myself the power to choose for you. If your physic be wholesome, it matters not who is your apothecary. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, not made over already; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

Lady Wish. This is most inhumanly savage; exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

Fain. I learned it from his Czarish majesty's retinue, in a winter evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practised in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endowed, in right of my wife, with six thousand pounds, which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession; and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased husband, Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her disobedience in contracting herself against your consent or knowledge; and by refusing the offered match with Sir Wilfull Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

Lady Wish. My nephew was *non compos*, and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands—I'll hear no objections.

Lady Wish. You will grant me time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand till more sufficient deeds can be perfected: which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the meanwhile I will go for the said instrument, and till my return you may balance this matter in your own discretion. [*Exit.*

Lady Wish. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel: must I be subject to this merciless villain?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis severe indeed, madam, that you should smart for your daughter's wantonness.

Lady Wish. 'Twas against my consent that she married this barbarian, but she would have him, though her year was not out.—Ah! her first husband, my son Languish, would not have carried it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers: she is matched now with a witness.—I shall be mad!—Dear friend, is there no comfort for me? must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate?—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

Enter Mrs. Millamant *and* Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Lady Wish. Out, caterpillar, call not me aunt! I know thee not!

Sir Wil. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say.—S'heart! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I have committed no offence, aunt—and if I did I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke anything I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to pleasure you I'm willing to marry my cousin. So pray let's all be friends; she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

Lady Wish. How's this, dear niece? Have I any comfort? Can this be true?

Mrs. Mil. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, madam; and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinformed, I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood: and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have obliged him to make a resignation of it in your ladyship's presence;—he is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

Lady Wish. Well, I'll swear I am something revived at this testimony of your obedience: but I cannot admit that traitor.—I fear I cannot fortify myself to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a gorgon; if I see him I fear I shall turn to stone, and petrify incessantly.

Mrs. Mil. If you disoblige him, he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

Lady Wish. Are you sure it will be the last time?—If I were sure of that—shall I never see him again?

Mrs. Mil. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

Sir Wil. S'heart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt, let him come in; why, we are sworn brothers and fellow-travellers.—We are to be Pylades and Orestes, he and I.—He is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been over-seas once already; and with proviso that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company.—S'heart, I'll call him in,—an I set on't once, he shall come in; and see who'll hinder him. [*Goes to the door and hems.*

Mrs. Mar. This is precious fooling, if it would pass; but I'll know the bottom of it.

Lady Wish. O dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mrs. Mar. Not far, madam; I'll return immediately. [*Exit.*

Enter MIRABELL.

Sir Wil. Look up, man, I'll stand by you; 'sbud an she do frown, she can't kill you; besides—harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own. S'heart, an she should, her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese; but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

Mir. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offered to so good a lady, with a sincere remorse, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy.—Ah, madam, there was a time!—but let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held of sighing at your feet. Nay, kill me not, by turning from me in disdain.—I come not to plead for favor; nay, not for pardon; I am a suppliant only for pity—I am going where I never shall behold you more—

Sir Wil. How, fellow-traveller! you shall go by yourself then.

Mir. Let me be pitied first, and afterwards forgotten.—I ask no more.

Sir Wil. By'r Lady, a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt! Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt. Why, you must, an you are a Christian.

Mir. Consider, madam, in reality, you could not receive much prejudice; it was an innocent device; though I confess it had a face of guiltiness,—it was at most an artifice which love contrived; and errors which love produces have ever been accounted venial. At least think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear, that to your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet; nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

Sir Wil. An he does not move me, would I may never be o' the quorum!—an it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again, I would I might never take shipping!—Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that. My contract went no farther than a little mouth glue, and that's hardly dry;—one doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller, and 'tis dissolved.

Lady Wish. Well, nephew, upon your account—Ah, he has a false insinuating tongue!—Well sir, I will stifle my just resentment at my nephew's request.—I will endeavor what I can to forget, but on proviso that you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

Mir. It is in writing, and with papers of concern; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

Lady Wish. [*Aside.*] Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue!—When I did not see him, I could have bribed a villain to his assassination; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smothered in my breast.

Enter FAINALL *and* MRS. MARWOOD.

Fain. Your date of deliberation, madam, is expired. Here is the instrument; are you prepared to sign?

Lady Wish. If I were prepared, I am not impowered. My niece exerts a lawful claim, having matched herself by my direction to Sir Wilfull.

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me—though 'tis imposed on you, madam.

Mrs. Mil. Sir, I have given my consent.

Mir. And, sir, I have resigned my pretensions.

Sir Wil. And, sir, I assert my right: and will maintain it in defiance of you, sir, and of your instrument. S'heart, an you talk of an instrument, sir, I have an old fox by my thigh that shall hack your instrument of ram vellum to shreds, sir! It shall not be sufficient for a mittimus or a tailor's measure. Therefore withdraw your instrument, sir, or by'r Lady, I shall draw mine.

Lady Wish. Hold, nephew, hold!

Mrs. Mil. Good Sir Wilfull, respite your valor.

Fain. Indeed! Are you provided of your guard, with your single beef-eater there? but I'm prepared for you, and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use, as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant.—I suppose, madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr. Mirabell, your resignation; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right.—You may draw your fox if you please, sir, and make a bear-garden flourish somewhere else: for here it will not avail. This, my Lady Wishfort, must be subscribed, or your darling daughter's turned adrift, like a

leaky hulk, to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lewd town can agree.

Lady Wish. Is there no means, no remedy to stop my ruin? Ungrateful wretch! dost thou not owe thy being, thy subsistence, to my daughter's fortune?

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

Mir. But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me; or else perhaps I could advise—

Lady Wish. O, what? what? To save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay, I'll consent to anything to come, to be delivered from this tyranny.

Mir. Ay, madam; but that is too late, my reward is intercepted. You have disposed of her who only could have made me a compensation for all my services; but be it as it may, I am resolved I'll serve you! you shall not be wronged in this savage manner.

Lady Wish. How! dear Mr. Mirabell, can you be so generous at last! But it is not possible. Harkee, I'll break my nephew's match; you shall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

Mir. Will you? I'll take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady Wish. Ay, ay, anybody, anybody!

Mir. Foible is one, and a penitent.

Enter Mrs. Fainall, Foible, *and* Mincing.

Mrs. Mar. Oh, my shame! [Mirabell *and* Lady Wishfort *go to* Mrs. Fainall *and* Foible.] These corrupt things are brought hither to expose me. [*To* Fainall.

Fain. If it must all come out, why let 'em know it; 'tis but the way of the world. That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one tittle of my terms; no, I will insist the more.

Foib. Yes, indeed, madam, I'll take my bible-oath of it.

Min. And so will I, mem.

Lady Wish. O Marwood, Marwood, art thou false? my friend deceive me! hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

Mrs. Mar. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice to give credit against your friend, to the aspersions of two such mercenary trulls?

Min. Mercenary, mem? I scorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. Fainall in the blue garret; by the same token, you swore us to secrecy upon Messalina's poems. Mercenary! No, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our tongues; you would have bribed us sufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an insignificant thing! —Well, what are you the better for this; is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer.—You thing, that was a wife, shall smart for this! I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy shame; your body shall be naked as your reputation.

Mrs. Fain. I despise you, and defy your malice!—you have aspersed me wrongfully—I have proved your falsehood—go you and your treacherous—I will not name it, but starve together—perish!

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear.—Madam, I'll be fooled no longer.

Lady Wish. Ah, Mr. Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair.

Mir. Oh, in good time—your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, madam.

Enter Waitwell *with a box of writings.*

Lady Wish. O Sir Rowland!—Well, rascal!

Wait. What your ladyship pleases. I have brought the black box at last, madam.

Mir. Give it me.—Madam, you remember your promise.

Lady Wish. Ay, dear sir.

Mir. Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, sir, rubbing their eyes—just risen from sleep.

Fain. 'Sdeath, what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

Enter Petulant *and* Witwoud.

Pet. How now? What's the matter? Whose hand's out?

Wit. Heyday! what, are you all got together, like players at the end of the last act?

Mir. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.

Wit. Ay, I do, my hand I remember—Petulant set his mark.

Mir. You wrong him, his name is fairly written, as shall appear.—You do not remember, gentlemen, anything of what that parchment contained?— [*Undoing the box.*

Wit. No.

Pet. Not I; I writ, I read nothing.

Mir. Very well, now you shall know.—Madam, your promise.

Lady Wish. Ay, ay, sir, upon my honor.

Mir. Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you should know that your lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune—

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mir. Yes, sir. I say that this lady while a widow, having it seems received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and

tyranny of temper, which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she could never have suspected—she did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends, and of sages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read if you please—[*Holding out the parchment*] though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasions.

Fain. Very likely, sir. What's here?—Damnation! [*Reads.*] *A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust to Edward Mirabell.*—Confusion!

Mir. Even so, sir; 'tis the way of the world, sir, of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtained from your lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be revenged.

[*Offers to run at* MRS. FAINALL.

Sir Wil. Hold, sir! Now you may make your bear-garden flourish somewhere else, sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir, be sure you shall.—Let me pass, oaf!

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Fain. Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment; you had better give it vent.

Mrs. Mar. Yes, it shall have vent—and to your confusion; or I'll perish in the attempt. [*Exit.*

Lady Wish. O daughter, daughter! 'Tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.

Lady Wish. Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine.—First, I pardon, for your sake, Sir Rowland there, and Foible; the next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that—

Mir. For that, madam, give yourself no trouble; let me have your consent. Sir Wilfull is my friend; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer in this action, for our service; and now designs to prosecute his travels.

Sir Wil. S'heart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't I must do't. And if these two gentlemen would travel too, I think they may be spared.

Pet. For my part, I say little—I think things are best off or on.

Wit. I'gad, I understand nothing of the matter; I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

Lady Wish. Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

Mrs. Mil. Why does not the man take me? Would you have me give myself to you over again?

Mir. Ay, and over and over again; [*Kisses her hand.*] I would have you as often as possibly I can. Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear.

Sir Wil. S'heart, you'll have time enough to toy after you're married; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the meantime, that we who are not lovers may have some other employment besides looking on.

Mir. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull. What shall we do for music?

Foib. Oh, sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call. [*A dance.*

Lady Wish. As I am a person, I can hold out no longer; I have wasted my spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

Mir. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account; to my knowledge his circumstances are such he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lies to a reunion; in the meantime, madam—[*To* MRS. FAINALL.] let me before these witnesses restore to you this deed of trust: it may be a means, well-managed, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warned, who mean to wed;
Lest mutual falsehood stain the bridal bed;
For each deceiver to his cost may find
That marriage-frauds too oft are paid in kind. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MRS. BRACEGIRDLE

After our Epilogue this crowd dismisses,
I'm thinking how this play'll be pulled to pieces.
But pray consider, ere you doom its fall,
How hard a thing 'twould be to please you all.
There are some critics so with spleen diseased,
They scarcely come inclining to be pleased:
And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
Who pleases any one against his will.
Then all bad poets we are sure are foes,
And how their number's swelled, the town well knows:
In shoals I've marked 'em judging in the pit;
Though they're, on no pretence, for judgment fit,

But that they have been damned for want of wit.
Since when, they by their own offences taught,
Set up for spies on plays, and finding fault.
Others there are whose malice we'd prevent;
Such who watch plays with scurrilous intent
To mark out who by characters are meant.
And though no perfect likeness they can trace,
Yet each pretends to know the copied face.
These with false glosses feed their own ill nature,
And turn to libel what was meant a satire.
May such malicious fops this fortune find,
To think themselves alone the fools designed:
If any are so arrogantly vain,
To think they singly can support a scene,
And furnish fool enough to entertain.
For well the learned and the judicious know
That satire scorns to stoop so meanly low,
As any one abstracted fop to show.
For, as when painters form a matchless face,
They from each fair one catch some different grace;
And shining features in one portrait blend,
To which no single beauty must pretend;
So poets oft do in one piece expose
Whole belles-assemblees of coquettes and beaux.

GEORGE FARQUHAR

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

George Farquhar's life-portrait may be viewed as a composite of the features of several other dramatists in our volume. In the circumstances of his Irish birth and Dublin University training, the last of the Restoration writers of comedy closely resembles Goldsmith, whose chief stage-success owes to him so much. In his youthful failure as an actor, in his triumphant decade as a playwright, and in his early and wretched end, he recalls the unhappy Otway. In the large sympathy of his intellect with the robust and joyous life of town and country, he has much in common with Harry Fielding, who drew his first breath in pleasant Somerset just a week before Farquhar died, April 29, 1707, in his London garret.

Very little is known of Farquhar's origin. The date of his birth, 1677 or 1678, the gentility of his parentage, the site of his father's Irish parish, are alike uncertain. The poems of his boyhood, "moral verses" and pompous "Pindaricks," bred in him no jigging vein, for knack at rime was ever denied him. His hazy career as sizar at Trinity College, Dublin, after his Londonderry lessons were over in 1694, was perhaps stopped short by a bit of boyish irreverence; but this inglorious tradition is of the vaguest. In his twentieth year he is suffering the horrors of stage fright on Dublin boards, ridiculously enough in his first rôle of "valiant Othello." He essays many other parts with no marked success, but his accidental wounding of a brother-actor soon drives him from the stage in disgust. Then he is off to London by the advice of the famous English actor, Robert Wilks, whose friendship always stands him in stead. If unlike many another fortune-seeking youth, he has no play in his pocket, one is soon in the making, and *Love and a Bottle* is staged at the end of 1698. Here, as so often in Farquhar's later comedies, the temptation is strong to identify the penniless young Irish rake of the piece with the adventurous author, but it is dangerous to push such a parallel. Not to pause over that bit of picaresque writing, which may or may not be Farquhar's own, *The Adventures of Covent Garden,* the next year sees the production of his second comedy, *The Constant Couple,* which ran for over fifty nights with Wilks in the chief rôle of Sir Harry Wildair and with Norris in the laughable part of Dicky, the

servant. Far inferior is the sequel, *Sir Harry Wildair,* acted in 1701; but there is no need to explain this inferiority as the unhappy result of Farquhar's infatuation for a fair unknown—some say, Anne Oldfield, whom the dramatist had discovered, a rich-voiced girl of sixteen, in her aunt's tavern and introduced to the stage. Though that charming woman graced later the rôles of Farquhar's chief heroines, as Mrs. Barry did those of Otway, and maintained always her friendship with the dramatist, we have small reason to suspect that she is the "Penelope" of his fervent love-letters. Farquhar's marriage, a year or two later, furnishes nought of romance but a grim suggestion of a comic motive that serves him well in his greatest play. Some feminine Aimwell from the North dupes the gay, handsome, young fellow by large pretensions to wealth; but Farquhar, though a fortune-hunter, is of gentler stuff than Thackeray's Deuce-ace and greatly to his honor "never once upbraided her with the cheat."

Farquhar's pen is still busy, and to some purpose. In 1702 appears his *Love and Business,*—a miscellany of stray verses, letters from Holland, a sensible essay upon "Comedy," and copies of love-letters—revealing the author as "half an actor, a quarter a poet, and altogether a very honest and gallant gentleman." Two unsuccessful comedies, *The Inconstant* and *The Twin-Rivals* (a thing of merit), a farce adapted from the French, *The Stage Coach,* and a halting epic, *Barcelona,* occupy the time between 1702 and 1705. For several years he has held an army commission, like Steele and Vanbrugh, his friends, and in 1706 he turns to capital account his own experience at Shrewsbury in his joyous comedy, *The Recruiting Officer,* with its memorable figures of Captain Plume and Silvia and, best of all, Sergeant Kite. After this signal triumph dark days come upon him, as upon Otway. Relying upon the assurances of the Duke of Ormond, whose "Grace makes promises trifles indeed" (see Archer's song in *The Beaux' Stratagem,* III, iii), he sells, in confident hope of other preferment, his commission for the benefit of his creditors and is soon plunged in misery and poverty. No final stage-scene is more replete with irony than the last act of Farquhar's own life-drama. The poor jester must "go to bed at noon"—he is barely thirty—but, though overwhelmed with want and settled sickness, he still has strength in him for his merriest peal of laughter. A dying man, he writes in six weeks, at the urging of the loyal Wilks, who provides a retainer of twenty guineas, his greatest comedy—perhaps the greatest, as it is the last, of all the comedies of the so-called Restoration period. While the Haymarket is ringing with the applause that greets *The Beaux' Stratagem* in April, 1707 (see the pathetic epilogue), Farquhar passes away in his wretched attic in St. Martin's Lane, entrusting his "two helpless girls" to his friend's protection. The situation rivals in grisly mockery the expiring Molière's mirth in his last interpretation of *Le Malade Imaginaire.*

The dates of Farquhar's plays suggest a seeming paradox. All the work of the last Restoration dramatist was done after Jeremy Collier's

vehement philippic, *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698), had dealt, thus many have maintained, a death-blow to the Restoration drama. As if in despite, Farquhar's gay world of riotous animal spirits seems abundantly alive. And yet his essay upon "Comedy," and his prologues show that the playwright was profoundly influenced by the preacher, at least in his professions. Amusingly enough, he sets up as a censor of morals. "Comedy," he declares, "is a well-framed tale handsomely told as an agreeable vehicle for counsel and reproof." It is his boast that he will improve upon Collier's invective and "make the stage flourish by virtue of his satire." More than once he assures the ladies that they may smile without blushing for "here's no slander, no smut, no lewd-tongued beau, no double-entendre." All this is very well; but, as with Fielding, who takes the same tone in his engaging prefaces, the gap between precept and practice is enormous. The color must have been fast set by art in cheeks that are unchanged in hue when Farquhar and Fielding laugh the loudest. The little homily is over and forgotten, and the "modest air" yields to "waggish action" (the phrases are Farquhar's own). It's a mad world, my masters, life seems but a turmoil of the senses, a riot of wild blood; and youth, pledged to love and a bottle, is willing to forego none of its trinity of joys, not even song. Let us be grateful for this much of virtue—that Restoration Comedy now abandons the covert wink and cruel leer, the unclean innuendo, the prurient suggestion, and becomes wholesome, if not always decent. In Farquhar there is, of course, not the faintest element of the simpering prudery and tearful sentimentality of the bourgeois comedy of reaction against the drama of large license.

The difference between Farquhar and his immediate forerunners in comedy is rather of temperament than of time. Unlike them he has a generous nature overflowing with sympathy and charity. In his modest account of himself he reveals a temper the reverse of libertine: "I hate all pleasure that's purchased by excess of pain;" "The greatest proof of my affection that a lady must expect is this—I would run any hazard to make us both happy, but would not for any transitory pleasure make us both miserable." Hence his dashing beaux, his Harry Wildair, his Archer and Aimwell, have not, like the gallants of Wycherley and Congreve, "foreheads of bronze, hearts like the nether millstone and tongues set on fire of hell" (Macaulay). Rattle-brained scapegraces they are to be sure, but they are quite without malice and inspire no contempt and loathing. Joyous adventurers, they fight, love, and banter in a breath, but their warm hearts preserve them from selfish irresponsibility and render them quite unequal to the task of villains. Reason, honor, and gratitude are as strong in these delightful rascals as in the high-spirited prodigals of Goldsmith and Sheridan; for they are, in Hazlitt's happy phrase, "real gentlemen and only pretended impostors." Archer's voluble good-fellowship in his footman's cloak renders him everybody's friend and equal, and Aimwell's scruples assert themselves even at

the cost of his marriage prospects. Miss Guiney puts it prettily—"none of the old deviltry, though much of the old swagger."

A marked sign of changing taste is observed in Farquhar's extension of the range of comic interest. His predecessors had been content to paint "beaux and belles enamored of themselves in one another's follies and fluttering like gilded butterflies in giddy mazes through the walks of St. James's Park," and in his earlier plays he followed their example. But in his two later and better comedies he deserts the conventional West End background of Park and Mall, he turns away even from "the sweet smoke of Cheapside and the dear perfume of Fleet Ditch," and to the ringing notes of his merry ballad-music, "Over the hills and far away," carries his audience with him to some county- or cathedral-town deep in the provinces, to Shrewsbury or Lichfield. Instead of the inevitable seventeenth-century drawing-room or city-lodging of Wycherley and Congreve, his scenes are those most familiar in eighteenth-century fiction, the market-place, the broad highway, the river walk, the country-inn, the squire's hall. And in this new setting, what a host of new characters! Every figure of *The Beaux' Stratagem* is memorable:—the rollicking "knight-errants," Aimwell and Archer; the knavish landlord drawn very much from life, Boniface—whose name has become proverbial of his class—confederate of highwaymen yet honestly eloquent over the merits of his *Anno Domini;* Gibbet and his brace of rogues, no idealized Turpins or Du Vals, but as humorously realistic ruffians as Stevenson's greedy pirates; Scrub, a real person too, one of the most amusing serving men of the comic stage with his cowardice and his itching palm; and the delicious Cherry, tight of waist, quick of eye, and true of heart. The provincial gentlefolk are equally amusing:—that best of women, Lady Bountiful, ever "spreading of plasters, brewing of diet-drinks and stilling rosemary-water"; Squire Sullen, her son, not a fiend like Vanbrugh's Sir John Brute, not a savage like Fielding's Western, but a dull animal sodden with drink and hence thick of speech and loutish of manner, perpetual offence to the fine lady from London, his wife, sprightly, witty, and far more alluring than her sister-in-law, the somewhat shadowy Dorinda. Strangely enough the only failure among the persons is the author's own countryman, the Jesuit priest, Foigard, who arouses with his wonderful jargon the wrath of sensitive Irish editors. Even the Frenchman Bellair, though omitted in acting versions, is more convincing.

Not only through genial characterization, but through laughing mastery over action is Farquhar eminent. In this high quality indeed he seems easily the first of his group. "*The Beaux' Stratagem,*" says Hazlitt, "is infinitely lively, bustling and full of point and interest; the assumed disguise of Archer and Aimwell is a perpetual amusement to the mind." In this straightforward story we are never confused as by the labyrinthine intricacy of *The Way of the World.* The plot knows no dull moments, but from its breezy beginning in the arrival of the crowd on the London coach develops

steadily and rapidly, with the interest shifting gaily from inn to hall, through a series of incidents at once humorous and sensational though never unnatural, to a highly agreeable resolution in the beaux' full triumph. At the mutual separation of Squire Sullen and his wife in the last scene, Nance Oldfield, the actress, was the first to cavil; but her objection, turned aside by Farquhar with a death-bed jest, is answered by William Archer, who deems "this discussion of the ethics of divorce not only the admission of a moral standard, but a homage to the idea of marriage which Wycherley, Congreve, or Vanbrugh would never have dreamt of paying." In any case we could ill afford to spare one of the cleverest bits of give and take in the comic drama. Single scenes of the play are admirable. In Farquhar's merriest vein are Cherry's love-catechism, Mrs. Sullen's lively picture of her drunken husband's home-coming, Aimwell's laughable account of the appearance of the stranger in the country church, and Archer's delightful diagnosis of his friend's stroke of love. Only the scene between Archer and Foigard in Act IV clamors loudly for reconstruction.

All critics have noticed that Farquhar's finest effects are derived rather from the humor of his situations than from the wit of his dialogues. Not that wit is wanting in him, as Mrs. Sullen's brilliancy amply attests, nor that he disdains the miniature social essay, for the gossipy news of the town in the first scene and the delicious criticism of country life in the second act anticipate the urban chat of Will Honeycomb of *The Spectator*. He can make, too, such famously happy phrases as Scrub's "I believe, they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly," and Gibbet's "'Twas for the good of my country that I should be abroad." His style is ever easy and natural. But conduct rather than conversation being his study, he is, unlike the inimitable Congreve, no consummate master of the quick foil of delicate repartee and artful innuendo. He seldom dazzles us with flashing epigrams and sparkling conceits, airy trifles of the Restoration smart set. Because in him this fineness, this preciosity of the inner circle, yields to the provincial and the picaresque, because his accent is not of "modish wit," but, as Mr. William Archer says, of "unforced buoyant gaiety," his diction has been forever branded by Pope, the arch-poet of artificial life, in the single line, "What pert low dialogue has Farquhar writ!"

An interesting phase of Farquhar's art is his intense hatred of formalism. "The rules of English comedy," he writes in that admirable essay of 1702, "don't lie in the compass of Aristotle or his followers, but in the pit, box, and galleries. . . . We shall find that these gentlemen [Shakspere, Jonson, Fletcher] have fairly dispensed with the greatest part of critical formalities; the decorums of time and place, so much cried up of late, had no force of decorum with them; the economy of their plays was *ad libitum*, and the extent of their plays only limited by the convenience of action. . . . A play may be written with all the exactness imaginable, in respect of unity in time and place; but if you inquire its character of any person, though of the

meanest understanding of the whole audience, he will tell you it is intolerable stuff." Again in the Prologue to *Sir Harry Wildair,* he swears that he cares not a pin for "learned pens" and "musty books," and assures his hearers, "You are the rules by which he writes his plays." And the Epilogue to *The Twin-Rivals* likewise hails the audience as the supreme court of judgment, "If you have damned the play, no power can save it." Farquhar's complete confidence in the popular taste, a notable contrast to the stereotyped contempt of "the great vulgar," has been abundantly justified by the instant success and long vogue of his best comedies.

Since its first appearance on March 8, 1707, *The Beaux' Stratagem* has been presented to more audiences and by greater actors than any other light drama of the Restoration—not excepting even *The Recruiting Officer.* Its first cast—Wilks as Archer, Verbruggen as Sullen, "Dicky" Norris as Scrub, Colley Abber as Gibbet, and Nance Oldfield as Mrs. Sullen—established a splendid precedent, well sustained by such interpreters as Garrick, in light blue and silver livery, and Charles Kemble as Archer, Quin as Sullen, Weston, Macklin, and Liston as Scrub (a rôle taken more than once by women), Kitty Clive as Cherry, and many famous actresses, Mrs. Pritchard, Peg Woffington, Mrs. Abington, Miss Farren, and Mrs. Jordan, in the part of Mrs. Sullen. The last revival of the play was at the Imperial Theatre, London, on September 22, 1879, with William Farren in Archer's rôle.

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

ADVERTISEMENT

The reader may find some faults in this play, which my illness prevented the amending of; but there is great amends made in the representation, which cannot be matched, no more than the friendly and indefatigable care of Mr. Wilks, to whom I chiefly owe the success of the play.

GEORGE FARQUHAR.

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. Wilks

When strife disturbs, or sloth corrupts an age,
Keen satire is the business of the stage.
When the *Plain-Dealer* writ, he lash'd those crimes,
Which then infested most—the modish times:
But now, when faction sleeps, and sloth is fled,
And all our youth in active fields are bred;

When through Great Britain's fair extensive round,
The trumps of fame, the notes of UNION sound;
When Anna's sceptre points the laws their course,
And her example gives her precepts force:
There scarce is room for satire; all our lays
Must be, or songs of triumph, or of praise.
But as in grounds best cultivated, tares
And poppies rise among the golden ears;
Our product so, fit for the field or school,
Must mix with nature's favorite plant—a fool:
A weed that has to twenty summers ran,
Shoots up in stalk, and vegetates to man.
Simpling our author goes from field to field,
And culls such fools as may diversion yield;
And, thanks to nature, there's no want of those,
For rain or shine, the thriving coxcomb grows.
Follies to-night we show ne'er lash'd before,
Yet such as nature shows you every hour;
Nor can the pictures give a just offence,
For fools are made for jests to men of sense.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

THOMAS AIMWELL, } *Two gentlemen of broken fortunes, the first as master, and the second as servant.*
FRANCIS ARCHER, }

COUNT BELLAIR, *A French Officer, prisoner at Lichfield.*

SQUIRE SULLEN, *a Country Blockhead, brutal to his Wife.*

SIR CHARLES FREEMAN, *a Gentleman from London, brother to* MRS. SULLEN.

FOIGARD, *a Priest, Chaplain to the French Officers.*

GIBBET, *a Highwayman.*

HOUNSLOW, } *His Companions.*
BAGSHOT, }

BONIFACE, *Landlord of the Inn.*

SCRUB, *Servant to* SQUIRE SULLEN.

WOMEN

LADY BOUNTIFUL, *an old, civil, Country Gentlewoman, that cures all her neighbors of all distempers, and foolishly fond of her son,* SQUIRE SULLEN.

MRS. SULLEN, *Her Daughter-in-law, wife to* SQUIRE SULLEN.

DORINDA, LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *Daughter.*

GIPSY, *Maid to the Ladies.*

CHERRY, *the Landlord's Daughter in the Inn.*

Tapster, Coach-passengers, Countryman, Countrywoman, and Servants.

SCENE.—LICHFIELD.

ACT I

SCENE I

A Room in BONIFACE'S *Inn.*

Enter BONIFACE *running.*

Bon. Chamberlain! maid! Cherry! daughter Cherry! all asleep? all dead?

Enter CHERRY *running.*

Cher. Here, here! why d'ye bawl so, father? d'ye think we have no ears?

Bon. You deserve to have none, you young minx! The company of the Warrington coach has stood in the hall this hour, and nobody to show them to their chambers.

Cher. And let 'em wait, father; there's neither red-coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

Bon. But they threaten to go to another inn to-night.

Cher. That they dare not, for fear the coachman should overturn them to-morrow. —Coming! coming!—Here's the London coach arrived.

Enter several people with trunks, bandboxes, and other luggage, and cross the stage.

Bon. Welcome, ladies!

Cher. Very welcome, gentlemen!—Chamberlain, show the Lion and the Rose.

[*Exit with the company.*

Enter AIMWELL *in a riding-habit, and* ARCHER *as footman, carrying a portmantle.*

Bon. This way, this way, gentlemen!

Aim. [*To* ARCHER.] Set down the things; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubbed.

Arch. I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, I'm old Will Boniface, pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

Aim. O Mr. Boniface, your servant!

Bon. O sir!—What will your honor please to drink, as the saying is?

Aim. I have heard your town of Lichfield much famed for ale; I think I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire; 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy; and will be just fourteen year old the fifth day of next March, old style.

Aim. You're very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, sir, as I am in the age of my children. I'll show you such ale!—Here, tapster, broach number 1706, as the saying is.—Sir, you shall taste my *Anno Domini.* —I have lived in Lichfield, man and boy, above eight-and-fifty years, and, I believe, have not consumed eight-and-fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, sir: I have fed purely upon ale; I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon ale.

Enter Tapster with a bottle and glass, and exit.

Now, sir, you shall see! [*Filling it out.*] Your worship's health.—Ha! delicious, delicious! fancy it burgundy, only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. [*Drinks.*] 'Tis confounded strong!

Bon. Strong! it must be so, or how should we be strong that drink it?

Aim. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord?

Bon. Eight-and-fifty years, upon my credit, sir—but it killed my wife, poor woman, as the saying is.

Aim. How came that to pass?

Bon. I don't know how, sir; she would not let the ale take its natural course, sir; she was for qualifying it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is; and an honest gentleman that came this way from Ireland, made her a present of a dozen bottles of usquebaugh—but the poor woman was never well after. But, howe'er, I was obliged to the gentleman, you know.

Aim. Why, was it the usquebaugh that killed her?

Bon. My Lady Bountiful said so. She, good lady, did what could be done; she cured her of three tympanies, but the fourth carried her off. But she's happy, and I'm contented, as the saying is.

Aim. Who's that Lady Bountiful you mentioned?

Bon. Ods my life, sir, we'll drink her health. —[*Drinks.*] My Lady Bountiful is one of the best of women. Her last husband, Sir Charles Bountiful, left her worth a thousand pound a year; and, I believe, she lays out one-half on't in charitable uses for the good of her neighbors. She cures rheumatisms, ruptures, and broken shins in men; green-sickness, obstructions, and fits of the mother, in women; the king's evil, chincough, and chilblains, in children: in short, she has cured more people in and about Lichfield within ten years than the doctors have killed in twenty; and that's a bold word.

Aim. Has the lady been any other way useful in her generation?

Bon. Yes, sir; she has a daughter by Sir Charles, the finest woman in all our country, and the greatest fortune. She has a son too, by her first husband, Squire Sullen, who married a fine lady from London t'other day; if you please, sir, we'll drink his health.

Aim. What sort of a man is he?

Bon. Why, sir, the man's well enough; says little, thinks less, and does—nothing at all, faith. But he's a man of a great estate, and values nobody.

Aim. A sportsman, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, he's a man of pleasure; he plays at whisk and smokes his pipe eight-and-forty hours together sometimes.

Aim. And married, you say?

Bon. Ay, and to a curious woman, sir. But he's a—he wants it here, sir.

[*Pointing to his forehead.*

Aim. He has it there, you mean?

Bon. That's none of my business; he's my landlord, and so a man, you know, would not—But—ecod, he's no better than—Sir, my humble service to you.—[*Drinks.*] Though I value not a farthing what he can do to me; I pay him his rent at quarter-day; I have a good running-trade; I have but one daughter, and I can give her—but no matter for that.

Aim. You're very happy, Mr. Boniface. Pray, what other company have you in town?

Bon. A power of fine ladies; and then we have the French officers.

Aim. Oh, that's right, you have a good many of those gentlemen. Pray, how do you like their company?

Bon. So well, as the saying is, that I could wish we had as many more of 'em; they're full of money, and pay double for everything they have. They know, sir, that we paid good round taxes for the taking of 'em, and so they are willing to reimburse us a little. One of 'em lodges in my house.

Re-enter Archer.

Arch. Landlord, there are some French gentlemen below that ask for you.

Bon. I'll wait on 'em.—[*Aside to* Archer.] Does your master stay long in town, as the saying is?

Arch. I can't tell, as the saying is.

Bon. Come from London?

Arch. No.

Bon. Going to London, mayhap?

Arch. No.

Bon. [*Aside.*] An odd fellow this.—[*To* Aimwell.] I beg your worship's pardon, I'll wait on you in half a minute. [*Exit.*

Aim. The coast's clear, I see.—Now, my dear Archer, welcome to Lichfield!

Arch. I thank thee, my dear brother in iniquity.

Aim. Iniquity! prithee, leave canting; you need not change your style with your dress.

Arch. Don't mistake me, Aimwell, for 'tis still my maxim, that there is no scandal like rags, nor any crime so shameful as poverty.

Aim. The world confesses it every day in its practice, though men won't own it for their opinion. Who did that worthy lord, my brother, single out of the side-box to sup with him t'other night?

Arch. Jack Handicraft, a handsome, well-dressed, mannerly, sharping rogue, who keeps the best company in town.

Aim. Right! And, pray, who married my lady Man-slaughter t'other day, the great fortune?

Arch. Why, Nick Marrabone, a professed pickpocket, and a good bowler; but he makes a handsome figure, and rides in his coach, that he formerly used to ride behind.

Aim. But did you observe poor Jack Generous in the Park last week?

Arch. Yes, with his autumnal periwig, shading his melancholy face, his coat older than anything but its fashion, with one hand idle in his pocket, and with the other picking his useless teeth; and, though the Mall was crowded with company, yet was poor Jack as single and solitary as a lion in a desert.

Aim. And as much avoided, for no crime upon earth but the want of money.

Arch. And that's enough. Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough, let 'em bustle. Fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their industry.

Aim. Upon which topic we proceed, and, I think, luckily hitherto. Would not any man swear now, that I am a man of quality, and you my servant, when if our intrinsic value were known——

Arch. Come, come, we are the men of intrinsic value who can strike our fortunes out of ourselves, whose worth is independent of accidents in life, or revolutions in government: we have heads to get money and hearts to spend it.

Aim. As to our hearts, I grant ye, they are as willing tits as any within twenty degrees: but I can have no great opinion of our heads from the service they have done us hitherto, unless it be that they have brought us from London hither to Lichfield, made me a lord and you my servant.

Arch. That's more than you could expect already. But what money have we left?

Aim. But two hundred pound.

Arch. And our horses, clothes, rings, etc.—Why, we have very good fortunes now for moderate people; and, let me tell you besides, that this two hundred pound, with the experience that we are now masters of, is a better estate than the ten thousand we have spent.—Our friends, indeed, began to suspect that our pockets were low, but we came off with flying colors, showed no signs of want either in word or deed.

Aim. Ay, and our going to Brussels was a good pretence enough for our sudden disap-

pearing; and, I warrant you, our friends imagine that we are gone a-volunteering.

Arch. Why, faith, if this prospect fails, it must e'en come to that. I am for venturing one of the hundreds, if you will, upon this knight-errantry; but, in case it should fail, we'll reserve t'other to carry us to some counterscarp, where we may die, as we lived, in a blaze.

Aim. With all my heart; and we have lived justly, Archer: we can't say that we have spent our fortunes, but that we have enjoyed 'em.

Arch. Right! So much pleasure for so much money. We have had our pennyworths; and, had I millions, I would go to the same market again.—O London! London! —Well, we have had our share, and let us be thankful: past pleasures, for aught I know, are best, such as we are sure of; those to come may disappoint us.

Aim. It has often grieved the heart of me to see how some inhuman wretches murder their kind fortunes; those that, by sacrificing all to one appetite, shall starve all the rest. You shall have some that live only in their palates, and in their sense of tasting shall drown the other four. Others are only epicures in appearances, such who shall starve their nights to make a figure a days, and famish their own to feed the eyes of others. A contrary sort confine their pleasures to the dark, and contract their spacious acres to the circuit of a muff-string.

Arch. Right! But they find the Indies in that spot where they consume 'em. And I think your kind keepers have much the best on't: for they indulge the most senses by one expense. There's the seeing, hearing, and feeling, amply gratified; and, some philosophers will tell you, that from such a commerce there arises a sixth sense, that gives infinitely more pleasure than the other five put together.

Aim. And to pass to the other extremity, of all keepers I think those the worst that keep their money.

Arch. Those are the most miserable wights in being, they destroy the rights of nature, and disappoint the blessings of Providence. Give me a man that keeps his five senses keen and bright as his sword, that has 'em always drawn out in their just order and strength, with his reason as commander at the head of 'em, that detaches 'em by turns upon whatever party of pleasure agreeably offers, and commands 'em to retreat upon the least appearance of disadvantage or danger! For my part, I can stick to my bottle while my wine, my company, and my reason, hold good; I can be charmed with Sappho's singing without falling in love with her face: I love hunting, but would not, like Actæon, be eaten up by my own dogs; I love a fine house, but let another keep it; and just so I love a fine woman.

Aim. In that last particular you have the better of me.

Arch. Ay, you're such an amorous puppy, that I'm afraid you'll spoil our sport; you can't counterfeit the passion without feeling it.

Aim. Though the whining part be out of doors in town, 'tis still in force with the country ladies: and let me tell you, Frank, the fool in that passion shall outdo the knave at any time.

Arch. Well, I won't dispute it now; you command for the day, and so I submit: at Nottingham, you know, I am to be master.

Aim. And at Lincoln, I again.

Arch. Then, at Norwich I mount, which, I think, shall be our last stage; for, if we fail there, we'll embark for Holland, bid adieu to Venus, and welcome Mars.

Aim. A match!—Mum!

Re-enter Boniface.

Bon. What will your worship please to have for supper?

Aim. What have you got?

Bon. Sir, we have a delicate piece of beef in the pot, and a pig at the fire.

Aim. Good supper-meat, I must confess. I can't eat beef, landlord.

Arch. And I hate pig.

Aim. Hold your prating, sirrah! Do you know who you are?

Bon. Please to bespeak something else; I have everything in the house.

Aim. Have you any veal?

Bon. Veal, sir! We had a delicate loin of veal on Wednesday last.

Aim. Have you got any fish or wildfowl?

Bon. As for fish, truly, sir, we are an inland town, and indifferently provided with fish, that's the truth on't; and then for wildfowl—we have a delicate couple of rabbits.

Aim. Get me the rabbits fricasseed.

Bon. Fricasseed! Lard, sir, they'll eat much better smothered with onions.

Arch. Psha! Damn your onions!

Aim. Again, sirrah!—Well, landlord, what you please. But hold, I have a small charge of money, and your house is so full of strangers, that I believe it may be safer in your custody than mine; for when this fellow of mine gets drunk he minds nothing.—Here, sirrah, reach me the strong-box.

Arch. Yes, sir.—[*Aside.*] This will give us a reputation. [*Brings the box.*]

Aim. Here, landlord; the locks are sealed down both for your security and mine; it holds somewhat above two hundred pound: if you doubt it, I'll count it to you after supper; but be sure you lay it where I may have it at a minute's warning; for my affairs are a little dubious at present; perhaps I may

be gone in half an hour, perhaps I may be your guest till the best part of that be spent; and pray order your ostler to keep my horses always saddled. But one thing above the rest I must beg, that you would let this fellow have none of your *Anno Domini*, as you call it; for he's the most insufferable sot.—Here, sirrah, light me to my chamber.

[*Exit, lighted by* ARCHER.

Bon. Cherry! daughter Cherry!

Re-enter CHERRY.

Cher. D'ye call, father?

Bon. Ay, child, you must lay by this box for the gentleman; 'tis full of money.

Cher. Money! all that money! why, sure, father, the gentleman comes to be chosen parliament-man. Who is he?

Bon. I don't know what to make of him; he talks of keeping his horses ready saddled, and of going perhaps at a minute's warning, or of staying perhaps till the best part of this be spent.

Cher. Ay, ten to one, father, he's a highwayman.

Bon. A highwayman! upon my life, girl, you have hit it, and this box is some new-purchased booty. Now, could we find him out, the money were ours.

Cher. He don't belong to our gang.

Bon. What horses have they?

Cher. The master rides upon a black.

Bon. A black! ten to one the man upon the black mare; and since he don't belong to our fraternity, we may betray him with a safe conscience; I don't think it lawful to harbor any rogues but my own. Look'ee, child, as the saying is, we must go cunningly to work, proofs we must have; the gentleman's servant loves drink, I'll ply him that way, and ten to one loves a wench: you must work him t'other way.

Cher. Father, would you have me give my secret for his?

Bon. Consider, child, there's two hundred pound to boot.—[*Ringing without.*] Coming! coming!—Child, mind your business. [*Exit.*

Cher. What a rogue is my father! My father! I deny it. My mother was a good, generous, free-hearted woman, and I can't tell how far her good nature might have extended for the good of her children. This landlord of mine, for I think I can call him no more, would betray his guest, and debauch his daughter into the bargain—by a footman too!

Re-enter ARCHER.

Arch. What footman, pray, mistress, is so happy as to be the subject of your contemplation?

Cher. Whoever he is, friend, he'll be but little the better for't.

Arch. I hope so, for, I'm sure, you did not think of me.

Cher. Suppose I had?

Arch. Why, then, you're but even with me; for the minute I came in, I was a-considering in what manner I should make love to you.

Cher. Love to me, friend!

Arch. Yes, child.

Cher. Child! manners!—If you kept a little more distance, friend, it would become you much better.

Arch. Distance! good-night, sauce-box.

[*Going.*

Cher. [*Aside.*] A pretty fellow! I like his pride.—[*Aloud.*] Sir, pray, sir, you see, sir [ARCHER *returns*], I have the credit to be entrusted with your master's fortune here, which sets me a degree above his footman; I hope, sir, you an't affronted?

Arch. Let me look you full in the face, and I'll tell you whether you can affront me or no. 'Sdeath, child, you have a pair of delicate eyes, and you don't know what to do with 'em!

Cher. Why, sir, don't I see everybody?

Arch. Ay, but if some women had 'em, they would kill everybody. Prithee, instruct me, I would fain make love to you, but I don't know what to say.

Cher. Why, did you never make love to anybody before?

Arch. Never to a person of your figure, I can assure you, madam. My addresses have been always confined to people within my own sphere; I never aspired so high before.

[*Sings.*

But you look so bright,
And are dressed so tight,
That a man would swear you're right,
As arm was e'er laid over.
Such an air
You freely wear
To ensnare,
As makes each guest a lover!

Since then, my dear, I'm your guest,
Prithee give me of the best
Of what is ready drest:
Since then, my dear, etc.

Cher. [*Aside.*] What can I think of this man?—[*Aloud.*] Will you give me that song, sir?

Arch. Ay, my dear, take it while 'tis warm.—[*Kisses her.*] Death and fire! her lips are honeycombs.

Cher. And I wish there had been bees too, to have stung you for your impudence.

Arch. There's a swarm of Cupids, my little Venus, that has done the business much better.

Cher. [*Aside.*] This fellow is misbegotten as well as I.—[*Aloud.*] What's your name, sir?

Arch. [*Aside.*] Name! egad, I have forgot it.—[*Aloud.*] Oh! Martin.

Cher. Where were you born?

Arch. In St. Martin's parish.

Cher. What was your father?

Arch. St. Martin's parish.

Cher. Then, friend, good-night.

Arch. I hope not.

Cher. You may depend upon't.

Arch. Upon what?

Cher. That you're very impudent.

Arch. That you're very handsome.

Cher. That you're a footman.

Arch. That you're an angel.

Cher. I shall be rude.

Arch. So shall I.

Cher. Let go my hand.

Arch. Give me a kiss. [*Kisses her.*

Bon. [*Without.*] Cherry! Cherry!

Cher. I'm—my father calls; you plaguy devil, how durst you stop my breath so? Offer to follow me one step, if you dare. [*Exit.*

Arch. A fair challenge, by this light! This is a pretty fair opening of an adventure; but we are knight-errants, and so Fortune be our guide. [*Exit.*

ACT II

SCENE I

A Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *House.*

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA, *meeting.*

Dor. Morrow, my dear sister; are you for church this morning?

Mrs. Sul. Anywhere to pray; for Heaven alone can help me. But I think, Dorinda, there's no form of prayer in the liturgy against bad husbands.

Dor. But there's a form of law in Doctors-Commons; and I swear, sister Sullen, rather than see you thus continually discontented, I would advise you to apply to that: for besides the part that I bear in your vexatious broils, as being sister to the husband, and friend to the wife, your example gives me such an impression of matrimony, that I shall be apt to condemn my person to a long vacation all its life. But supposing, madam, that you brought it to a case of separation, what can you urge against your husband? My brother is, first, the most constant man alive.

Mrs. Sul. The most constant husband, I grant ye.

Dor. He never sleeps from you.

Mrs. Sul. No, he always sleeps with me.

Dor. He allows you a maintenance suitable to your quality.

Mrs. Sul. A maintenance! do you take me, madam, for an hospital child, that I must sit down, and bless my benefactors for meat, drink, and clothes? As I take it, madam, I brought your brother ten thousand pounds, out of which I might expect some pretty things, called pleasures.

Dor. You share in all the pleasures that the country affords.

Mrs. Sul. Country pleasures! racks and torments! Dost think, child, that my limbs were made for leaping of ditches, and clambering over stiles? or that my parents, wisely foreseeing my future happiness in country pleasures, had early instructed me in rural accomplishments of drinking fat ale, playing at whisk, and smoking tobacco with my husband? or of spreading of plasters, brewing of diet-drinks, and stilling rosemary-water, with the good old gentlewoman my mother-in-law?

Dor. I'm sorry, madam, that it is not more in our power to divert you; I could wish, indeed, that our entertainments were a little more polite, or your taste a little less refined. But, pray, madam, how came the poets and philosophers, that labored so much in hunting after pleasure, to place it at last in a country life?

Mrs. Sul. Because they wanted money, child, to find out the pleasures of the town. Did you ever see a poet or philosopher worth ten thousand pound? if you can show me such a man, I'll lay you fifty pound you'll find him somewhere within the weekly bills. Not that I disapprove rural pleasures, as the poets have painted them; in their landscape, every Phillis has her Corydon, every murmuring stream and every flowery mead gives fresh alarms to love. Besides, you'll find, that their couples were never married. But yonder I see my Corydon, and a sweet swain it is, Heaven knows! Come, Dorinda, don't be angry, he's my husband, and your brother; and, between both, is he not a sad brute?

Dor. I have nothing to say to your part of him, you're the best judge.

Mrs. Sul. O sister, sister! if ever you marry, beware of a sullen, silent sot, one that's always musing, but never thinks. There's some diversion in a talking blockhead; and since a woman must wear chains, I would have the pleasure of hearing 'em rattle a little. Now you shall see, but take this by the way. He came home this morning at his usual hour of four, wakened me out of a sweet dream of something else, by tumbling over the tea-table, which he broke all to pieces; after his man and he had rolled about the room, like sick passengers in a storm, he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket; his feet cold as ice, his breath hot as a furnace, and his hands and his face as greasy as his flannel night-cap. O matrimony! He tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his

shoulders, disorders the whole economy of my bed, leaves me half naked, and my whole night's comfort is the tuneable serenade of that wakeful nightingale, his nose! Oh, the pleasure of counting the melancholy clock by a snoring husband! But now, sister, you shall see how handsomely, being a well-bred man, he will beg my pardon.

Enter Sullen.

Squire Sul. My head aches consumedly.

Mrs. Sul. Will you be pleased, my dear, to drink tea with us this morning? It may do your head good.

Squire Sul. No.

Dor. Coffee, brother?

Squire Sul. Psha!

Mrs. Sul. Will you please to dress, and go to church with me? The air may help you.

Squire Sul. Scrub! [*Calls.*

Enter Scrub.

Scrub. Sir!

Squire Sul. What day o' th' week is this?

Scrub. Sunday, an't please your worship.

Squire Sul. Sunday! Bring me a dram; and d'ye hear, set out the venison-pasty, and a tankard of strong beer upon the hall-table; I'll go to breakfast. [*Going.*

Dor. Stay, stay, brother, you shan't get off so; you were very naught last night, and must make your wife reparation; come, come, brother, won't you ask pardon?

Squire Sul. For what?

Dor. For being drunk last night.

Squire Sul. I can afford it, can't I?

Mrs. Sul. But I can't, sir.

Squire Sul. Then you may let it alone.

Mrs. Sul. But I must tell you, sir, that this is not to be borne.

Squire Sul. I'm glad on't.

Mrs. Sul. What is the reason, sir, that you use me thus inhumanly?

Squire Sul. Scrub!

Scrub. Sir!

Squire Sul. Get things ready to shave my head. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. Have a care of coming near his temples, Scrub, for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor. —[*Exit* Scrub.] Inveterate stupidity! Did you ever know so hard, so obstinate a spleen as his? O sister, sister! I shall never ha' good of the beast till I get him to town; London, dear London, is the place for managing and breaking a husband.

Dor. And has not a husband the same opportunities there for humbling a wife?

Mrs. Sul. No, no, child, 'tis a standing maxim in conjugal discipline, that when a man would enslave his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would be arbitrary with her husband, she wheedles her booby up to town. A man dare not play the tyrant in London, because there are so many examples to encourage the subject to rebel. O Dorinda! Dorinda! a fine woman may do anything in London: o' my conscience, she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

Dor. I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Lichfield; you have drawn the French Count to your colors already.

Mrs. Sul. The French are a people that can't live without their gallantries.

Dor. And some English that I know, sister, are not averse to such amusements.

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think, one way to rouse my lethargic, sottish husband, is to give him a rival. Security begets negligence in all people, and men must be alarmed to make 'em alert in their duty. Women are like pictures, of no value in the hands of a fool, till he hears men of sense bid high for the purchase.

Dor. This might do, sister, if my brother's understanding were to be convinced into a passion for you; but, I fancy, there's a natural aversion on his side; and I fancy, sister, that you don't come much behind him, if you dealt fairly.

Mrs. Sul. I own it, we are united contradictions, fire and water: but I could be contented, with a great many other wives, to humor the censorious mob, and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him but to dissemble a little kindness to keep me in countenance.

Dor. But how do you know, sister, but that, instead of rousing your husband by this artifice to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury?

Mrs. Sul. Let him: if I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

Dor. But how must I behave myself between ye?

Mrs. Sul. You must assist me.

Dor. What, against my own brother?

Mrs. Sul. He's but half a brother, and I'm your entire friend. If I go a step beyond the bounds of honor, leave me; till then, I expect you should go along with me in everything; while I trust my honor in your hands, you may trust your brother's in mine. The count is to dine here to-day.

Dor. 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like that man.

Mrs. Sul. You like nothing; your time is not come; love and death have their fatalities, and strike home one time or other. You'll pay for all one day, I warrant ye. But come, my lady's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church time. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

A Room in Boniface's *Inn.*

Enter Aimwell *dressed, and* Archer.

Aim. And was she the daughter of the house?

Arch. The landlord is so blind as to think so; but I dare swear she has better blood in her veins.

Aim. Why dost thou think so?

Arch. Because the baggage has a pert *je ne sais quoi;* she reads plays, keeps a monkey, and is troubled with vapors.

Aim. By which discoveries I guess that you know more of her.

Arch. Not yet, faith; the lady gives herself airs; forsooth, nothing under a gentleman!

Aim. Let me take her in hand.

Arch. Say one word more o' that, and I'll declare myself, spoil your sport there, and everywhere else; look ye, Aimwell, every man in his own sphere.

Aim. Right; and therefore you must pimp for your master.

Arch. In the usual forms, good sir, after I have served myself.—But to our business. You are so well dressed, Tom, and make so handsome a figure, that I fancy you may do execution in a country church; the exterior part strikes first, and you're in the right to make that impression favorable.

Aim. There's something in that which may turn to advantage. The appearance of a stranger in a country church draws as many gazers as a blazing-star; no sooner he comes into the cathedral, but a train of whispers runs buzzing round the congregation in a moment: *Who is he? Whence comes he? Do you know him?* Then I, sir, tips me the verger with half-a-crown; he pockets the simony, and inducts me into the best pew in the church. I pull out my snuff-box, turn myself round, bow to the bishop, or the dean, if he be the commanding-officer; single out a beauty, rivet both my eyes to hers, set my nose a-bleeding by the strength of imagination, and show the whole church my concern, by my endeavoring to hide it. After the sermon, the whole town gives me to her for a lover, and by persuading the lady that I am a-dying for her, the tables are turned, and she in good earnest falls in love with me.

Arch. There's nothing in this, Tom, without a precedent; but instead of riveting your eyes to a beauty, try to fix 'em upon a fortune; that's our business at present.

Aim. Psha! no woman can be a beauty without a fortune. Let me alone, for I am a marksman.

Arch. Tom!

Aim. Ay.

Arch. When were you at church before, pray?

Aim. Um—I was there at the coronation.

Arch. And how can you expect a blessing by going to church now?

Aim. Blessing! nay, Frank, I ask but for a wife. [*Exit.*

Arch. Truly, the man is not very unreasonable in his demands.

[*Exit at the opposite door.*

Enter Boniface *and* Cherry.

Bon. Well, daughter, as the saying is, have you brought Martin to confess?

Cher. Pray, father, don't put me upon getting anything out of a man; I'm but young, you know, father, and I don't understand wheedling.

Bon. Young! why, you jade, as the saying is, can any woman wheedle that is not young? Your mother was useless at five-and-twenty. Not wheedle! would you make your mother a whore, and me a cuckold, as the saying is? I tell you, his silence confesses it, and his master spends his money so freely, and is so much a gentleman every manner of way, that he must be a highwayman.

Enter Gibbet, *in a cloak.*

Gib. Landlord, landlord, is the coast clear?

Bon. O Mr. Gibbet, what's the news?

Gib. No matter, ask no questions, all fair and honorable.—Here, my dear Cherry.—[*Gives her a bag.*] Two hundred sterling pounds, as good as any that ever hanged or saved a rogue; lay 'em by with the rest; and here—three wedding or mourning rings, 'tis much the same you know—here, two silver-hilted swords; I took those from fellows that never show any part of their swords but the hilts—here is a diamond necklace which the lady hid in the privatest place in the coach, but I found it out—this gold watch I took from a pawnbroker's wife; it was left in her hands by a person of quality: there's the arms upon the case.

Cher. But who had you the money from?

Gib. Ah! poor woman! I pitied her;—from a poor lady just eloped from her husband. She had made up her cargo, and was bound for Ireland, as hard as she could drive; she told me of her husband's barbarous usage, and so I left her half-a-crown. But I had almost forgot, my dear Cherry, I have a present for you.

Cher. What is't?

Gib. A pot of ceruse, my child, that I took out of a lady's under-pocket.

Cher. What, Mr. Gibbet, do you think that I paint?

Gib. Why, you jade, your betters do; I'm sure the lady that I took it from had a

coronet upon her handkerchief. Here, take my cloak, and go, secure the premises.

Cher. I will secure 'em. [*Exit.*

Bon. But, hark'ee, where's Hounslow and Bagshot?

Gib. They'll be here to-night.

Bon. D'ye know of any other gentlemen o' the pad on this road?

Gib. No.

Bon. I fancy that I have two that lodge in the house just now.

Gib. The devil! how d'ye smoke 'em?

Bon. Why, the one is gone to church.

Gib. That's suspicious, I must confess.

Bon. And the other is now in his master's chamber; he pretends to be servant to the other. We'll call him out and pump him a little.

Gib. With all my heart.

Bon. Mr. Martin! Mr. Martin! [*Calls.*

Enter ARCHER, *combing a periwig and singing.*

Gib. The roads are consumed deep, I'm as dirty as Old Brentford at Christmas.—A good pretty fellow that. Whose servant are you, friend?

Arch. My master's.

Gib. Really!

Arch. Really.

Gib. That's much.—The fellow has been at the bar by his evasions.—But, pray, sir, what is your master's name?

Arch. Tall, all, dall!—[*Sings and combs the periwig.*] This is the most obstinate curl——

Gib. I ask you his name?

Arch. Name, sir—*tall, all, dall!*—I never asked him his name in my life.—*Tall, all, dall!*

Bon. What think you now?

[*Aside to* GIBBET.

Gib. [*Aside to* BONIFACE.] Plain, plain, he talks now as if he were before a judge.—[*To* ARCHER.] But pray, friend, which way does your master travel?

Arch. A-horseback.

Gib. [*Aside.*] Very well, again, an old offender, right.—[*To* ARCHER.] But, I mean, does he go upwards or downwards?

Arch. Downwards, I fear, sir.—*Tall, all!*

Gib. I'm afraid my fate will be a contrary way.

Bon. Ha! ha! ha! Mr. Martin, you're very arch. This gentleman is only travelling towards Chester, and would be glad of your company, that's all.—Come, captain, you'll stay to-night, I suppose? I'll show you a chamber—come, captain.

Gib. Farewell, friend!

Arch. Captain, your servant.—[*Exeunt* BONIFACE *and* GIBBET.] Captain! a pretty fellow! 'Sdeath, I wonder that the officers of the army don't conspire to beat all scoundrels in red but their own.

Re-enter CHERRY.

Cher. [*Aside.*] Gone, and Martin here! I hope he did not listen; I would have the merit of the discovery all my own, because I would oblige him to love me.—[*Aloud.*] Mr. Martin, who was that man with my father?

Arch. Some recruiting serjeant, or whipped-out trooper, I suppose.

Cher. All's safe, I find. [*Aside.*

Arch. Come, my dear, have you conned over the catechise I taught you last night?

Cher. Come, question me.

Arch. What is love?

Cher. Love is I know not what, it comes I know not how, and goes I know not when.

Arch. Very well, an apt scholar.—[*Chucks her under the chin.*] Where does love enter?

Cher. Into the eyes.

Arch. And where go out?

Cher. I won't tell ye.

Arch. What are the objects of that passion?

Cher. Youth, beauty, and clean linen.

Arch. The reason?

Cher. The two first are fashionable in nature, and the third at court.

Arch. That's my dear.—What are the signs and tokens of that passion?

Cher. A stealing look, a stammering tongue, words improbable, designs impossible, and actions impracticable.

Arch. That's my good child, kiss me.—What must a lover do to obtain his mistress?

Cher. He must adore the person that disdains him, he must bribe the chambermaid that betrays him, and court the footman that laughs at him. He must—he must——

Arch. Nay, child, I must whip you if you don't mind your lesson; he must treat his——

Cher. Oh ay!—he must treat his enemies with respect, his friends with indifference, and all the world with contempt; he must suffer much, and fear more; he must desire much, and hope little; in short, he must embrace his ruin, and throw himself away.

Arch. Had ever man so hopeful a pupil as mine!—Come, my dear, why is love called a riddle?

Cher. Because, being blind, he leads those that see, and, though a child, he governs a man.

Arch. Mighty well!—And why is Love pictured blind?

Cher. Because the painters out of the weakness or privilege of their art chose to hide those eyes that they could not draw.

Arch. That's my dear little scholar, kiss me again.—And why should Love, that's a child, govern a man?

Cher. Because that a child is the end of love.

Arch. And so ends Love's catechism.—And now, my dear, we'll go in and make my master's bed.

Cher. Hold, hold, Mr. Martin! You have taken a great deal of pains to instruct me, and what d'ye think I have learned by it?

Arch. What?

Cher. That your discourse and your habit are contradictions, and it would be nonsense in me to believe you a footman any longer.

Arch. 'Oons, what a witch it is!

Cher. Depend upon this, sir, nothing in this garb shall ever tempt me; for, though I was born to servitude, I hate it. Own your condition, swear you love me, and then——

Arch. And then we shall go make the bed?

Cher. Yes.

Arch. You must know, then, that I am born a gentleman, my education was liberal; but I went to London a younger brother, fell into the hands of sharpers, who stripped me of my money, my friends disowned me, and now my necessity brings me to what you see.

Cher. Then take my hand—promise to marry me before you sleep, and I'll make you master of two thousand pounds.

Arch. How!

Cher. Two thousand pounds that I have this minute in my own custody; so, throw off your livery this instant, and I'll go find a parson.

Arch. What said you? a parson!

Cher. What! do you scruple?

Arch. Scruple! no, no, but—Two thousand pounds, you say?

Cher. And better.

Arch. [*Aside.*] 'Sdeath, what shall I do?—[*Aloud.*] But hark'ee, child, what need you make me master of yourself and money, when you may have the same pleasure out of me, and still keep your fortune in your hands?

Cher. Then you won't marry me?

Arch. I would marry you, but——

Cher. O sweet sir, I'm your humble servant, you're fairly caught! Would you persuade me that any gentleman who could bear the scandal of wearing a livery would refuse two thousand pounds, let the condition be what it would? no, no, sir. But I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken, since it was only to inform myself of the respect that I ought to pay you. [*Going.*

Arch. [*Aside.*] Fairly bit, by Jupiter!—[*Aloud.*] Hold! hold!—And have you actually two thousand pounds?

Cher. Sir, I have my secrets as well as you; when you please to be more open I shall be more free, and be assured that I have discoveries that will match yours, be what they will. In the meanwhile, be satisfied that no discovery I make shall ever hurt you; but beware of my father! [*Exit.*

Arch. So! we're like to have as many adventures in our inn as Don Quixote had in his. Let me see—two thousand pounds! If the wench would promise to die when the money were spent, egad, one would marry her; but the fortune may go off in a year or two, and the wife may live—Lord knows how long. Then an innkeeper's daughter! ay, that's the devil—there my pride brings me off.

For whatsoe'er the sages charge on pride,
The angels' fall, and twenty faults beside,
On earth, I'm sure, 'mong us of mortal calling,
Pride saves man oft, and woman too, from falling. [*Exit.*

ACT III

SCENE I

The Gallery in LADY BOUNTIFUL'S *House.*

Enter MRS. SULLEN *and* DORINDA.

Mrs. Sul. Ha! ha! ha! my dear sister, let me embrace thee! Now we are friends indeed; for I shall have a secret of yours as a pledge for mine—now you'll be good for something, I shall have you conversable in the subjects of the sex.

Dor. But do you think that I am so weak as to fall in love with a fellow at first sight?

Mrs. Sul. Psha! now you spoil all; why should not we be as free in our friendships as the men? I warrant you, the gentleman has got to his confidant already, has avowed his passion, toasted your health, called you ten thousand angels, has run over your lips, eyes, neck, shape, air, and everything, in a description that warms their mirth to a second enjoyment.

Dor. Your hand, sister, I an't well.

Mrs. Sul. So—she's breeding already—come, child, up with it—hem a little—so—now tell me, don't you like the gentleman that we saw at church just now?

Dor. The man's well enough.

Mrs. Sul. Well enough! is he not a demigod, a Narcissus, a star, the man i' the moon?

Dor. O sister, I'm extremely ill!

Mrs. Sul. Shall I send to your mother, child, for a little of her cephalic plaster to put to the soles of your feet, or shall I send to the gentleman for something for you? Come, unlace your stays, unbosom yourself. The man is perfectly a pretty fellow; I saw him when he first came into church.

Dor. I saw him too, sister, and with an air that shone, methought, like rays about his person.

Mrs. Sul. Well said, up with it!

Dor. No forward coquette behavior, no airs to set him off, no studied looks nor artful posture—but nature did it all——

Mrs. Sul. Better and better!—one touch more—come!

Dor. But then his looks—did you observe his eyes?

Mrs. Sul. Yes, yes, I did.—His eyes, well, what of his eyes?

Dor. Sprightly, but not wandering; they seemed to view, but never gazed on anything but me.—And then his looks so humble were, and yet so noble, that they aimed to tell me that he could with pride die at my feet, though he scorned slavery anywhere else.

Mrs. Sul. The physic works purely!—How d'ye find yourself now, my dear?

Dor. Hem! much better, my dear.—Oh, here comes our Mercury!

Enter Scrub.

Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

Scrub. Madam, I have brought you a packet of news.

Dor. Open it quickly, come.

Scrub. In the first place I inquired who the gentleman was; they told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked what the gentleman was; they answered and said, that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I inquired what countryman he was; they replied, 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded whence he came; their answer was, they could not tell. And, fifthly, I asked whither he went; and they replied, they knew nothing of the matter,—and this is all I could learn.

Mrs. Sul. But what do the people say? can't they guess?

Scrub. Why, some think he's a spy, some guess he's a mountebank, some say one thing, some another: but, for my own part, I believe he's a Jesuit.

Dor. A Jesuit! why a Jesuit?

Scrub. Because he keeps his horses always ready saddled, and his footman talks French.

Mrs. Sul. His footman!

Scrub. Ay, he and the Count's footman were jabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond; and I believe they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.

Dor. What sort of livery has the footman?

Scrub. Livery! Lord, madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizened with lace! And then he has tops to his shoes, up to his mid leg, a silver-headed cane dangling at his knuckles; he carries his hands in his pockets just so—[*walks in the French air*]—and has a fine long periwig tied up in a bag.—Lord, madam, he's clear another sort of man than I!

Mrs. Sul. That may easily be.—But what shall we do now, sister?

Dor. I have it—this fellow has a world of simplicity, and some cunning; the first hides the latter by abundance.—Scrub!

Scrub. Madam!

Dor. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

Scrub. Yes, madam, it would be a satisfaction, no doubt.

Dor. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale, because you're butler to-day.

Scrub. Yes, madam, I am butler every Sunday.

Mrs. Sul. O brave! sister, o' my conscience, you understand the mathematics already. 'Tis the best plot in the world: your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be got to the ale-house with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own—so we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves. In the country, you know, any stranger is company, and we're glad to take up with the butler in a country-dance and happy if he'll do us the favor.

Scrub. O madam, you wrong me! I never refused your ladyship the favor in my life.

Enter Gipsy.

Gip. Ladies, dinner's upon table.

Dor. Scrub, we'll excuse your waiting—go where we ordered you.

Scrub. I shall. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

A Room in Boniface's *Inn.*

Enter Aimwell *and* Archer.

Arch. Well, Tom, I find you're a marksman.

Aim. A marksman! who so blind could be, as not discern a swan among the ravens?

Arch. Well, but hark'ee, Aimwell!

Aim. Aimwell! call me Oroondates, Cesario, Amadis, all that romance can in a lover paint, and then I'll answer. O Archer! I read her thousands in her looks, she looked like Ceres in her harvest: corn, wine and oil, milk and honey, gardens, groves, and purling streams played on her plenteous face.

Arch. Her face! her pocket, you mean; the corn, wine and oil, lies there. In short, she has ten thousand pounds, that's the English on't.

Aim. Her eyes——

Arch. Are demi-cannons, to be sure; so I won't stand their battery. [*Going.*

Aim. Pray excuse me, my passion must have vent.

Arch. Passion! what a plague, d'ye think these romantic airs will do our business? Were my temper as extravagant as yours, my adventures have something more romantic by half.

Aim. Your adventures!

Arch. Yes,

The nymph that with her twice ten hundred pounds,
With brazen engine hot, and quoif clear-starched,
Can fire the guest in warming of the bed——
There's a touch of sublime Milton for you, and the subject but an innkeeper's daughter! I can play with a girl as an angler does with his fish; he keeps it at the end of his line, runs it up the stream, and down the stream, till at last he brings it to hand, tickles the trout, and so whips it into his basket.

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. Mr. Martin, as the saying is—yonder's an honest fellow below, my Lady Bountiful's butler, who begs the honor that you would go home with him and see his cellar.

Arch. Do my *baise-mains* to the gentleman, and tell him I will do myself the honor to wait on him immediately. [*Exit* BONIFACE.

Aim. What do I hear?
Soft Orpheus play, and fair Toftida sing!

Arch. Psha! damn your raptures; I tell you, here's a pump going to be put into the vessel, and the ship will get into harbor, my life on't. You say, there's another lady very handsome there?

Aim. Yes, faith.

Arch. I'm in love with her already.

Aim. Can't you give me a bill upon Cherry in the meantime?

Arch. No, no, friend, all her corn, wine and oil, is ingrossed to my market. And once more I warn you, to keep your anchorage clear of mine; for if you fall foul of me, by this light you shall go to the bottom! What! make prize of my little frigate, while I am upon the cruise for you!——

Aim. Well, well, I won't. [*Exit* ARCHER.

Re-enter BONIFACE.

Landlord, have you any tolerable company in the house, I don't care for dining alone?

Bon. Yes, sir, there's a captain below, as the saying is, that arrived about an hour ago.

Aim. Gentlemen of his coat are welcome everywhere; will you make him a compliment from me and tell him I should be glad of his company?

Bon. Who shall I tell him, sir, would——

Aim. [*Aside.*] Ha! that stroke was well thrown in!—[*Aloud.*] I'm only a traveller, like himself, and would be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. I obey your commands, as the saying is. [*Exit.*

Re-enter ARCHER.

Arch. 'Sdeath! I had forgot; what title will you give yourself?

Aim. My brother's, to be sure; he would never give me anything else, so I'll make bold with his honor this bout:—you know the rest of your cue.

Arch. Ay, ay. [*Exit.*

Enter GIBBET.

Gib. Sir, I'm yours.

Aim. 'Tis more than I deserve, sir, for I don't know you.

Gib. I don't wonder at that, sir, for you never saw me before—[*Aside.*] I hope.

Aim. And pray, sir, how came I by the honor of seeing you now?

Gib. Sir, I scorn to intrude upon any gentleman—but my landlord——

Aim. O sir, I ask your pardon, you're the captain he told me of?

Gib. At your service, sir.

Aim. What regiment, may I be so bold?

Gib. A marching regiment, sir, an old corps.

Aim. [*Aside.*] Very old, if your coat be regimental.—[*Aloud.*] You have served abroad, sir?

Gib. Yes, sir, in the plantations, 'twas my lot to be sent into the worst service; I would have quitted it indeed, but a man of honor, you know—Besides, 'twas for the good of my country that I should be abroad:—anything for the good of one's country—I'm a Roman for that.

Aim. [*Aside.*] One of the first; I'll lay my life. [*Aloud.*] You found the West Indies very hot, sir?

Gib. Ay, sir, too hot for me.

Aim. Pray, sir, han't I seen your face at Will's coffee-house?

Gib. Yes, sir, and at White's too.

Aim. And where is your company now, captain?

Gib. They an't come yet.

Aim. Why, d'ye expect 'em here?

Gib. They'll be here to-night, sir.

Aim. Which way do they march?

Gib. Across the country.—[*Aside.*] The devil's in't, if I han't said enough to encourage him to declare! But I'm afraid he's not right; I must tack about.

Aim. Is your company to quarter in Lichfield?

Gib. In this house, sir.

Aim. What! all?

Gib. My company's but thin, ha! ha! ha! we are but three, ha! ha! ha!

Aim. You're merry, sir.

Gib. Ay, sir, you must excuse me, sir; I understand the world, especially the art of travelling: I don't care, sir, for answering questions directly upon the road—for I generally ride with a charge about me.

Aim. [*Aside.*] Three or four, I believe.

Gib. I am credibly informed that there are highwaymen upon this quarter; not, sir, that I could suspect a gentleman of your figure—but truly, sir, I have got such a way

of evasion upon the road, that I don't care for speaking truth to any man.

Aim. [*Aside.*] Your caution may be necessary.—[*Aloud.*] Then I presume you're no captain?

Gib. Not I, sir; captain is a good travelling name, and so I take it; it stops a great many foolish inquiries that are generally made about gentlemen that travel, it gives a man an air of something, and makes the drawers obedient:—and thus far I am a captain, and no farther.

Aim. And pray, sir, what is your true profession?

Gib. O sir, you must excuse me!—upon my word, sir, I don't think it safe to tell ye.

Aim. Ha! ha! ha! upon my word I commend you.

Re-enter Boniface.

Well, Mr. Boniface, what's the news?

Bon. There's another gentleman below, as the saying is, that hearing you were but two, would be glad to make the third man, if you would give him leave.

Aim. What is he?

Bon. A clergyman, as the saying is.

Aim. A clergyman! is he really a clergyman? or is it only his travelling name, as my friend the captain has it?

Bon. O sir, he's a priest, and chaplain to the French officers in town.

Aim. Is he a Frenchman?

Bon. Yes, sir, born at Brussels.

Gib. A Frenchman, and a priest! I won't be seen in his company, sir; I have a value for my reputation, sir.

Aim. Nay, but, captain, since we are by ourselves—Can he speak English, landlord?

Bon. Very well, sir; you may know him, as the saying is, to be a foreigner by his accent, and that's all.

Aim. Then he has been in England before?

Bon. Never, sir; but he's a master of languages, as the saying is; he talks Latin—it does me good to hear him talk Latin.

Aim. Then you understand Latin, Mr. Boniface?

Bon. Not I, sir, as the saying is; but he talks it so very fast, that I'm sure it must be good.

Aim. Pray, desire him to walk up.

Bon. Here he is, as the saying is.

Enter Foigard.

Foi. Save you, gentlemens, both.

Aim. [*Aside.*] A Frenchman!—[*To* Foigard.] Sir, your most humble servant.

Foi. Och, dear joy, I am your most faithful shervant, and yours alsho.

Gib. Doctor, you talk very good English, but you have a mighty twang of the foreigner.

Foi. My English is very vell for the vords, but we foreigners, you know, cannot bring our tongues about the pronunciation so soon.

Aim. [*Aside.*] A foreigner! a downright Teague, by this light!—[*Aloud.*] Were you born in France, doctor?

Foi. I was educated in France, but I was borned at Brussels; I am a subject of the King of Spain, joy.

Gib. What King of Spain, sir? speak!

Foi. Upon my shoul, joy, I cannot tell you as yet.

Aim. Nay, captain, that was too hard upon the doctor; he's a stranger.

Foi. Oh, let him alone, dear joy; I am of a nation that is not easily put out of countenance.

Aim. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the dispute.—Here, landlord, is dinner ready?

Bon. Upon the table, as the saying is.

Aim. Gentlemen—pray—that door——

Foi. No, no, fait, the captain must lead.

Aim. No, doctor, the church is our guide.

Gib. Ay, ay, so it is.

[*Exit* Foigard *foremost, they follow.*

Scene III

The Gallery in Lady Bountiful's *House.*

Enter Archer *and* Scrub *singing, and hugging one another,* Scrub *with a tankard in his hand.* Gipsy *listening at a distance.*

Scrub. Tall, all, dall!—Come, my dear boy, let's have that song once more.

Arch. No, no, we shall disturb the family.—But will you be sure to keep the secret?

Scrub. Pho! upon my honor, as I'm a gentleman.

Arch. 'Tis enough. You must know, then, that my master is the Lord Viscount Aimwell; he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously, that he thinks fit to withdraw till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not. He never was in this part of England before, so he chose to retire to this place, that's all.

Gip. [*Aside.*] And that's enough for me.

[*Exit.*

Scrub. And where were you when your master fought?

Arch. We never know of our masters' quarrels.

Scrub. No! If our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do is to tell their wives; the wife tells the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour you shall have the whole county in arms.

Arch. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for.—But if you should chance to talk now of my business?

Scrub. Talk! ay, sir, had I not learned the knack of holding my tongue, I had never lived so long in a great family.

Arch. Ay, ay, to be sure there are secrets in all families.

Scrub. Secrets! ay;—but I'll say no more. Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard: here—— [*Gives* Archer *the tankard.*

Arch. With all my heart; who knows but you and I may come to be better acquainted, eh? Here's your ladies' healths; you have three, I think, and to be sure there must be secrets among 'em.

Scrub. Secrets! ay, friend.—I wish I had a friend!

Arch. Am not I your friend? Come, you and I will be sworn brothers.

Scrub. Shall we?

Arch. From this minute. Give me a kiss:—and now, brother Scrub——

Scrub. And now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret that will make your hair stand on end. You must know that I am consumedly in love.

Arch. That's a terrible secret, that's the truth on't.

Scrub. That jade, Gipsy, that was with us just now in the cellar, is the arrantest whore that ever wore a petticoat; and I'm dying for love of her.

Arch. Ha! ha! ha!—Are you in love with her person or her virtue, brother Scrub?

Scrub. I should like virtue best, because it is more durable than beauty: for virtue holds good with some women long, and many a day after they have lost it.

Arch. In the country, I grant ye, where no woman's virtue is lost, till a bastard be found.

Scrub. Ay, could I bring her to a bastard, I should have her all to myself; but I dare not put it upon that lay, for fear of being sent for a soldier. Pray, brother, how do you gentlemen in London like that same Pressing Act?

Arch. Very ill, brother Scrub; 'tis the worst that ever was made for us. Formerly I remember the good days, when we could dun our masters for our wages, and if they refused to pay us, we could have a warrant to carry 'em before a Justice: but now if we talk of eating, they have a warrant for us, and carry us before three Justices.

Scrub. And to be sure we go, if we talk of eating; for the Justices won't give their own servants a bad example. Now this is my misfortune—I dare not speak in the house, while that jade Gipsy dings about like a fury.—Once I had the better end of the staff.

Arch. And how comes the change now?

Scrub. Why, the mother of all this mischief is a priest.

Arch. A priest!

Scrub. Ay, a damned son of a whore of Babylon, that came over hither to say grace to the French officers, and eat up our provisions. There's not a day goes over his head without a dinner or supper in this house.

Arch. How came he so familiar in the family?

Scrub. Because he speaks English as if he had lived here all his life, and tells lies as if he had been a traveller from his cradle.

Arch. And this priest, I'm afraid, has converted the affections of your Gipsy?

Scrub. Converted! ay, and perverted, my dear friend: for, I'm afraid, he has made her a whore and a papist! But this is not all; there's the French count and Mrs. Sullen, they're in the confederacy, and for some private ends of their own, to be sure.

Arch. A very hopeful family yours, brother Scrub! I suppose the maiden lady has her lover too?

Scrub. Not that I know. She's the best on 'em, that's the truth on't. But they take care to prevent my curiosity, by giving me so much business, that I'm a perfect slave. What d'ye think is my place in this family?

Arch. Butler, I suppose.

Scrub. Ah, Lord help you! I'll tell you. Of a Monday I drive the coach; of a Tuesday I drive the plough; on Wednesday I follow the hounds; a Thursday I dun the tenants; on Friday I go to market; on Saturday I draw warrants; and a Sunday I draw beer.

Arch. Ha! ha! ha! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother. But what ladies are those?

Enter Mrs. Sullen *and* Dorinda.

Scrub. Ours, ours; that upon the right hand is Mrs. Sullen, and the other is Mrs. Dorinda. Don't mind 'em; sit still, man.

Mrs. Sul. I have heard my brother talk of my Lord Aimwell; but they say that his brother is the finer gentleman.

Dor. That's impossible, sister.

Mrs. Sul. He's vastly rich, but very close, they say.

Dor. No matter for that; if I can creep into his heart, I'll open his breast, I warrant him. I have heard say, that people may be guessed at by the behavior of their servants; I could wish we might talk to that fellow.

Mrs. Sul. So do I; for I think he's a very pretty fellow. Come this way, I'll throw out a lure for him presently.

[*They walk a turn towards the opposite side of the stage.*

Arch. [*Aside.*] Corn, wine, and oil indeed!—But, I think, the wife has the greatest plenty of flesh and blood; she should be my choice.—Ay, ay, say you so!—[Mrs. Sullen *drops her glove,* Archer *runs, takes it up and gives to her.*] Madam—your ladyship's glove.

Mrs. Sul. O sir, I thank you!—[*To* Do-

RINDA.] What a handsome bow the fellow has!

Dor. Bow! why, I have known several footmen come down from London set up here for dancing-masters, and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

Arch. [*Aside.*] That project, for aught I know, had been better than ours.—[*To* SCRUB.] Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me?

Scrub. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant that you saw at church today; I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might show me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

Dor. And I hope you have made much of him?

Arch. Oh yes, madam, but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

Mrs. Sul. What, then you don't usually drink ale?

Arch. No, madam; my constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water. 'Tis prescribed me by the physician for a remedy against the spleen.

Scrub. Oh la! Oh la! a footman have the spleen!

Mrs. Sul. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality?

Arch. Madam, like all other fashions it wears out, and so descends to their servants; though in a great many of us, I believe, it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

Dor. [*Aside to* MRS. SULLEN.] How affectedly the fellow talks!—[*To* ARCHER.] How long, pray, have you served your present master?

Arch. Not long; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

Mrs. Sul. And pray, which service do you like best?

Arch. Madam, the ladies pay best; the honor of serving them is sufficient wages; there is a charm in their looks that delivers a pleasure with their commands, and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] That flight was above the pitch of a livery.—[*Aloud.*] And, sir, would not you be satisfied to serve a lady again?

Arch. As a groom of the chamber, madam, but not as a footman.

Mrs. Sul. I suppose you served as footman before?

Arch. For that reason I would not serve in that post again; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London. My Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I served, called me up one morning, and told me, "Martin, go to my Lady Allnight with my humble service; tell her I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday, and left word with Mrs. Rebecca, that the preliminaries of the affair she knows of, are stopped till we know the concurrence of the person that I know of, for which there are circumstances wanting which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that in the meantime there is a person about her ladyship, that from several hints and surmises, was accessory at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things, that to her knowledge are of more importance——"

Mrs. Sul., Dor. Ha! ha! ha! where are you going, sir?

Arch. Why, I han't half done!—The whole howd'ye was about half an hour long; so I happened to misplace two syllables, and was turned off, and rendered incapable.

Dor. [*Aside to* MRS. SULLEN.] The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw!—[*To* ARCHER.] But, friend, if your master be married, I presume you still serve a lady?

Arch. No, madam, I take care never to come into a married family; the commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary, that 'tis impossible to please both.

Dor. There's a main point gained: my lord is not married, I find. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Sul. But I wonder, friend, that in so many good services, you had not a better provision made for you.

Arch. I don't know how, madam. I had a lieutenancy offered me three or four times; but that is not bread, madam—I live much better as I do.

Scrub. Madam, he sings rarely! I was thought to do pretty well here in the country till he came; but alack a day, I'm nothing to my brother Martin!

Dor. Does he?—Pray, sir, will you oblige us with a song?

Arch. Are you for passion or humor?

Scrub. Oh le! he has the purest ballad about a trifle——

Mrs. Sul. A trifle! pray, sir, let's have it.

Arch. I'm ashamed to offer you a trifle, madam; but since you command me—

[*Sings to the tune of "Sir Simon the King."*

A trifling song you shall hear,
Begun with a trifle and ended:
All trifling people draw near,
And I shall be nobly attended.

Were it not for trifles, a few,
That lately have come into play;
The men would want something to do,
And the women want something to say.

What makes men trifle in dressing?
Because the ladies (they know)

Admire, by often possessing,
That eminent trifle, a beau.

When the lover his moments has trifled,
The trifle of trifles to gain:
No sooner the virgin is rifled,
But a trifle shall part 'em again.

What mortal man would be able
At White's half an hour to sit?
Or who could bear a tea-table,
Without talking of trifles for wit?

The court is from trifles secure,
Gold keys are no trifles, we see:
White rods are no trifles, I'm sure,
Whatever their bearers may be.

But if you will go to the place,
Where trifles abundantly breed,
The levee will show you His Grace
Makes promises trifles indeed.

A coach with six footmen behind,
I count neither trifle nor sin:
But, ye gods! how oft do we find
A scandalous trifle within.

A flask of champagne, people think it
A trifle, or something as bad:
But if you'll contrive how to drink it,
You'll find it no trifle, egad!

A parson's a trifle at sea,
A widow's a trifle in sorrow:
A peace is a trifle to-day,
Who knows what may happen to-morrow!

A black coat a trifle may cloak,
Or to hide it, the red may endeavor:
But if once the army is broke,
We shall have more trifles than ever.

The stage is a trifle, they say,
The reason, pray carry along,
Because at every new play,
The house they with trifles so throng.

But with people's malice to trifle,
And to set us all on a foot:
The author of this is a trifle,
And his song is a trifle to boot.

Mrs. Sul. Very well, sir, we're obliged to you.—Something for a pair of gloves. [*Offering him money.*

Arch. I humbly beg leave to be excused: my master, madam, pays me; nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honor, and disobeying his commands. [*Exit with* Scrub.

Dor. This is surprising! Did you ever see so pretty a well-bred fellow?

Mrs. Sul. The devil take him for wearing that livery!

Dor. I fancy, sister, he may be some gentleman, a friend of my lord's, that his lordship has pitched upon for his courage, fidelity, and discretion, to bear him company in this dress, and who ten to one was his second too.

Mrs. Sul. It is so, it must be so, and it shall be so!—for I like him.

Dor. What! better than the Count?

Mrs. Sul. The Count happened to be the most agreeable man upon the place; and so I chose him to serve me in my design upon my husband. But I should like this fellow better in a design upon myself.

Dor. But now, sister, for an interview with this lord and this gentleman; how shall we bring that about?

Mrs. Sul. Patience! you country ladies give no quarter if once you be entered. Would you prevent their desires, and give the fellows no wishing-time? Look'ee, Dorinda, if my Lord Aimwell loves you or deserves you, he'll find a way to see you, and there we must leave it. My business comes now upon the tapis. Have you prepared your brother?

Dor. Yes, yes.

Mrs. Sul. And how did he relish it?

Dor. He said little, mumbled something to himself, promised to be guided by me—but here he comes.

Enter Sullen.

Squire Sul. What singing was that I heard just now?

Mrs. Sul. The singing in your head, my dear; you complained of it all day.

Squire Sul. You're impertinent.

Mrs. Sul. I was ever so, since I became one flesh with you.

Squire Sul. One flesh! rather two carcasses joined unnaturally together.

Mrs. Sul. Or rather a living soul coupled to a dead body.

Dor. So, this is fine encouragement for me!

Squire Sul. Yes, my wife shows you what you must do.

Mrs. Sul. And my husband shows you what you must suffer.

Squire Sul. 'Sdeath, why can't you be silent?

Mrs. Sul. 'Sdeath, why can't you talk?

Squire Sul. Do you talk to any purpose?

Mrs. Sul. Do you think to any purpose?

Squire Sul. Sister, hark'ee!—[*Whispers.*] I shan't be home till it be late. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. What did he whisper to ye?

Dor. That he would go round the back way, come into the closet, and listen as I directed him. But let me beg you once more, dear sister, to drop this project; for as I told you before, instead of awaking him to kindness, you may provoke him to a rage; and then who knows how far his brutality may carry him?

Mrs. Sul. I'm provided to receive him, I

warrant you. But here comes the Count: vanish! [*Exit* Dorinda.

Enter Count Bellair.

Don't you wonder, Monsieur le Count, that I was not at church this afternoon?

Count Bel. I more wonder, madam, that you go dere at all, or how you dare to lift those eyes to heaven that are guilty of so much killing.

Mrs. Sul. If Heaven, sir, has given to my eyes with the power of killing the virtue of making a cure, I hope the one may atone for the other.

Count Bel. Oh, largely, madam, would your ladyship be as ready to apply the remedy as to give the wound. Consider, madam, I am doubly a prisoner; first to the arms of your general, then to your more conquering eyes. My first chains are easy—there a ransom may redeem me; but from your fetters I never shall get free.

Mrs. Sul. Alas, sir! why should you complain to me of your captivity, who am in chains myself? You know, sir, that I am bound, nay, must be tied up in that particular that might give you ease: I am like you, a prisoner of war—of war, indeed—I have given my parole of honor! would you break yours to gain your liberty?

Count Bel. Most certainly I would, were I a prisoner among the Turks; dis is your case, you're a slave, madam, slave to the worst of Turks, a husband.

Mrs. Sul. There lies my foible, I confess; no fortifications, no courage, conduct, nor vigilancy, can pretend to defend a place where the cruelty of the governor forces the garrison to mutiny.

Count Bel. And where de besieger is resolved to die before de place.—Here will I fix [*Kneels*];—with tears, vows, and prayers assault your heart and never rise till you surrender; or if I must storm—Love and St. Michael!—And so I begin the attack.

Mrs. Sul. Stand off!—[*Aside.*] Sure he hears me not!—And I could almost wish—he did not!—The fellow makes love very prettily.—[*Aloud.*] But, sir, why should you put such a value upon my person, when you see it despised by one that knows it so much better?

Count Bel. He knows it not, though he possesses it; if he but knew the value of the jewel he is master of, he would always wear it next his heart, and sleep with it in his arms.

Mrs. Sul. But since he throws me unregarded from him——

Count Bel. And one that knows your value well comes by and takes you up, is it not justice? [*Goes to lay hold of her.*

Enter Sullen *with his sword drawn.*

Squire Sul. Hold, villain, hold!

Mrs. Sul. [*Presenting a pistol.*] Do you hold!

Squire Sul. What! murder your husband, to defend your bully!

Mrs. Sul. Bully! for shame, Mr. Sullen, bullies wear long swords, the gentleman has none; he's a prisoner, you know. I was aware of your outrage, and prepared this to receive your violence; and, if occasion were, to preserve myself against the force of this other gentleman.

Count Bel. O madam, your eyes be bettre firearms than your pistol; they never miss.

Squire Sul. What! court my wife to my face!

Mrs. Sul. Pray, Mr. Sullen, put up; suspend your fury for a minute.

Squire Sul. To give you time to invent an excuse!

Mrs. Sul. I need none.

Squire Sul. No, for I heard every syllable of your discourse.

Count Bel. Ah! and begar, I tink the dialogue was vera pretty.

Mrs. Sul. Then I suppose, sir, you heard something of your own barbarity?

Squire Sul. Barbarity! 'Oons, what does the woman call barbarity? Do I ever meddle with you?

Mrs. Sul. No.

Squire Sul. As for you, sir, I shall take another time.

Count Bel. Ah, begar, and so must I.

Squire Sul. Look'ee, madam, don't think that my anger proceeds from any concern I have for your honor, but for my own, and if you can contrive any way of being a whore without making me a cuckold, do it and welcome.

Mrs. Sul. Sir, I thank you kindly, you would allow me the sin but rob me of the pleasure. No, no, I'm resolved never to venture upon the crime without the satisfaction of seeing you punished for't.

Squire Sul. Then will you grant me this, my dear? Let anybody else do you the favor but that Frenchman, for I mortally hate his whole generation. [*Exit.*

Count Bel. Ah, sir, that be ungrateful, for begar, I love some of yours.—Madam—— [*Approaching her.*

Mrs. Sul. No, sir.

Count Bel. No, sir! garzoon, madam, I am not your husband.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis time to undeceive you, sir. I believed your addresses to me were no more than an amusement, and I hope you will think the same of my complaisance; and to convince you that you ought, you must know that I brought you hither only to make you instrumental in setting me right with my husband, for he was planted to listen by my appointment.

Count Bel. By your appointment?

Mrs. Sul. Certainly.

Count Bel. And so, madam, while I was telling twenty stories to part you from your husband, begar, I was bringing you together all the while?

Mrs. Sul. I ask your pardon, sir, but I hope this will give you a taste of the virtue of the English ladies.

Count Bel. Begar, madam, your virtue be vera great, but garzoon, your honeste be vera little.

Re-enter Dorinda.

Mrs. Sul. Nay, now, you're angry, sir.

Count Bel. Angry!—*Fair Dorinda* [*Sings 'Fair Dorinda,' the opera tune, and addresses Dorinda.*] Madam, when your ladyship want a fool, send for me. *Fair Dorinda, Revenge, etc.* [*Exit singing.*

Mrs. Sul. There goes the true humor of his nation—resentment with good manners, and the height of anger in a song! Well, sister, you must be judge, for you have heard the trial.

Dor. And I bring in my brother guilty.

Mrs. Sul. But I must bear the punishment. 'Tis hard, sister.

Dor. I own it; but you must have patience.

Mrs. Sul. Patience! the cant of custom—Providence sends no evil without a remedy. Should I lie groaning under a yoke I can shake off, I were accessory to my ruin, and my patience were no better than self-murder.

Dor. But how can you shake off the yoke? your divisions don't come within the reach of the law for a divorce.

Mrs. Sul. Law! what law can search into the remote abyss of nature? What evidence can prove the unaccountable disaffections of wedlock? Can a jury sum up the endless aversions that are rooted in our souls, or can a bench give judgment upon antipathies?

Dor. They never pretended, sister; they never meddle, but in case of uncleanness.

Mrs. Sul. Uncleanness! O sister! casual violation is a transient injury, and may possibly be repaired, but can radical hatreds be ever reconciled? No, no, sister, nature is the first lawgiver, and when she has set tempers opposite, not all the golden links of wedlock nor iron manacles of law can keep 'em fast.

Wedlock we own ordain'd by Heaven's decree,
But such as Heaven ordain'd it first to be;—
Concurring tempers in the man and wife
As mutual helps to draw the load of life.
View all the works of Providence above,
The stars with harmony and concord move;
View all the works of Providence below,
The fire, the water, earth and air, we know,
All in one plant agree to make it grow.
Must man, the chiefest work of art divine,
Be doomed in endless discord to repine?
No, we should injure Heaven by that surmise,
Omnipotence is just, were man but wise.

ACT IV

Scene I

The Gallery in Lady Bountiful's *House.*

Enter Mrs. Sullen.

Mrs. Sul. Were I born an humble Turk, where women have no soul nor property, there I must sit contented. But in England, a country whose women are its glory, must women be abused? Where women rule, must women be enslaved? Nay, cheated into slavery, mocked by a promise of comfortable society into a wilderness of solitude! I dare not keep the thought about me. Oh, here comes something to divert me.

Enter a Countrywoman.

Wom. I come, an't please your ladyship—you're my Lady Bountiful, an't ye?

Mrs. Sul. Well, good woman, go on.

Wom. I have come seventeen long mail to have a cure for my husband's sore leg.

Mrs. Sul. Your husband! what, woman, cure your husband!

Wom. Ay, poor man, for his sore leg won't let him stir from home.

Mrs. Sul. There, I confess, you have given me a reason. Well, good woman, I'll tell you what you must do. You must lay your husband's leg upon a table, and with a chopping-knif- you must lay it open as broad as you can, then you must take out the bone, and beat the flesh soundly with a rolling-pin; then take salt, pepper, cloves, mace, and ginger, some sweet-herbs, and season it very well; then roll it up like brawn, and put it into the oven for two hours.

Wom. Heavens reward your ladyship!—I have two little babies too that are piteous bad with the graips, an't please ye.

Mrs. Sul. Put a little pepper and sa't in their bellies, good woman.

Enter Lady Bountiful.

I beg your ladyship's pardon for taking your business out of your hands; I have been a-tampering here a little with one of your patients.

Lady Boun. Come, good woman, don't mind this mad creature; I am the person that you want, I suppose. What would you have, woman?

Mrs. Sul. She wants something for her husband's sore leg.

Lady Boun. What's the matter with his leg, goody?

Wom. It come first, as one might say, with a sort of dizziness in his foot, then he had a kind of laziness in his joints, and then his leg broke out, and then it swelled, and then it closed again, and then it broke out again, and then it festered, and then it grew better, and then it grew worse again.

Mrs. Sul. Ha! ha! ha!

Lady Boun. How can you be merry with the misfortunes of other people?

Mrs. Sul. Because my own make me sad, madam.

Lady Boun. The worst reason in the world, daughter; your own misfortunes should teach you to pity others.

Mrs. Sul. But the woman's misfortunes and mine are nothing alike; her husband is sick, and mine, alas, is in health.

Lady Boun. What! would you wish your husband sick?

Mrs. Sul. Not of a sore leg, of all things.

Lady Boun. Well, good woman, go to the pantry, get your bellyful of victuals, then I'll give you a receipt of diet-drink for your husband. But d'ye hear, goody, you must not let your husband move too much?

Wom. No, no, madam, the poor man's inclinable enough to lie still. [*Exit.*

Lady Boun. Well, daughter Sullen, though you laugh, I have done miracles about the country here with my receipts.

Mrs. Sul. Miracles indeed, if they have cured anybody; but I believe, madam, the patient's faith goes farther toward the miracle than your prescription.

Lady Boun. Fancy helps in some cases; but there's your husband, who has as little fancy as anybody, I brought him from death's door.

Mrs. Sul. I suppose, madam, you made him drink plentifully of ass's milk.

Enter Dorinda, *runs to* Mrs. Sullen.

Dor. News, dear sister! news! news!

Enter Archer, *running.*

Arch. Where, where is my Lady Bountiful?—Pray, which is the old lady of you three?

Lady Boun. I am.

Arch. O madam, the fame of your ladyship's charity, goodness, benevolence, skill and ability, have drawn me hither to implore your ladyship's help in behalf of my unfortunate master, who is this moment breathing his last.

Lady Boun. Your master! where is he?

Arch. At your gate, madam. Drawn by the appearance of your handsome house to view it nearer, and walking up the avenue within five paces of the courtyard, he was taken ill of a sudden with a sort of I know not what, but down he fell, and there he lies.

Lady Boun. Here, Scrub! Gipsy! all run, get my easy chair down stairs, put the gentleman in it, and bring him in quickly! quickly!

Arch. Heaven will reward your ladyship for this charitable act.

Lady Boun. Is your master used to these fits?

Arch. O yes, madam, frequently: I have known him have five or six of a night.

Lady Boun. What's his name?

Arch. Lord, madam, he's a-dying! a minute's care or neglect may save or destroy his life.

Lady Boun. Ah, poor gentleman!—Come, friend, show me the way; I'll see him brought in myself. [*Exit with* Archer.

Dor. O sister, my heart flutters about strangely! I can hardly forbear running to his assistance.

Mrs. Sul. And I'll lay my life he deserves your assistance more than he wants it. Did not I tell you that my lord would find a way to come at you? Love's his distemper, and you must be the physician; put on all your charms, summon all your fire into your eyes, plant the whole artillery of your looks against his breast, and down with him.

Dor. O sister! I'm but a young gunner; I shall be afraid to shoot, for fear the piece should recoil, and hurt myself.

Mrs. Sul. Never fear, you shall see me shoot before you, if you will.

Dor. No, no, dear sister; you have missed your mark so unfortunately, that I shan't care for being instructed by you.

Enter Aimwell *in a chair carried by* Archer *and* Scrub; Lady Bountiful *and* Gipsy *following.* Aimwell *counterfeiting a swoon.*

Lady Boun. Here, here, let's see the hartshorn drops.—Gipsy, a glass of fair water! His fit's very strong.—Bless me, how his hands are clinched!

Arch. For shame, ladies, what d'ye do? why don't you help us?—[*To* Dorinda.] Pray, madam, take his hand, and open it, if you can, whilst I hold his head.

[Dorinda *takes his hand.*

Dor. Poor gentleman!—Oh!—he has got my hand within his, and squeezes it unmercifully——

Lady Boun. 'Tis the violence of his convulsion, child.

Arch. Oh, madam, he's perfectly possessed in these cases—he'll bite if you don't have a care.

Dor. Oh, my hand! my hand!

Lady Boun. What's the matter with the

foolish girl? I have got this hand open, you see, with a great deal of ease.

Arch. Ay, but, madam, your daughter's hand is somewhat warmer than your ladyship's, and the heat of it draws the force of the spirits that way.

Mrs. Sul. I find, friend, you're very learned in these sorts of fits.

Arch. 'Tis no wonder, madam, for I'm often troubled with them myself; I find myself extremely ill at this minute.

[*Looking hard at* Mrs. Sullen.

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] I fancy I could find a way to cure you.

Lady Boun. His fit holds him very long.

Arch. Longer than usual, madam.—Pray, young lady, open his breast and give him air.

Lady Boun. Where did his illness take him first, pray?

Arch. To-day at church, madam.

Lady Boun. In what manner was he taken?

Arch. Very strangely, my lady. He was of a sudden touched with something in his eyes, which, at the first, he only felt, but could not tell whether 'twas pain or pleasure.

Lady Boun. Wind, nothing but wind!

Arch. By soft degrees it grew and mounted to his brain, there his fancy caught it; there formed it so beautiful, and dressed it up in such gay, pleasing colors, that his transported appetite seized the fair idea, and straight conveyed it to his heart. That hospitable seat of life sent all its sanguine spirits forth to meet, and opened all its sluicy gates to take the stranger in.

Lady Boun. Your master should never go without a bottle to smell to.—Oh—he recovers! The lavender-water—some feathers to burn under his nose—Hungary water to rub his temples.—Oh, he comes to himself!—Hem a little, sir, hem.—Gipsy! bring the cordial-water.

[Aimwell *seems to awake in amaze.*

Dor. How d'ye, sir?

Aim. Where am I? [*Rising.*

Sure I have pass'd the gulf of silent death,
And now I land on the Elysian shore!—
Behold the goddess of those happy plains,
Fair Proserpine—let me adore thy bright divinity.

[*Kneels to* Dorinda, *and kisses her hand.*

Mrs. Sul. So, so, so! I knew where the fit would end!

Aim. Eurydice perhaps—
How could thy Orpheus keep his word,
And not look back upon thee?
No treasure but thyself could sure have bribed him
To look one minute off thee.

Lady Boun. Delirious, poor gentleman!

Arch. Very delirious, madam, very delirious.

Aim. Martin's voice, I think.

Arch. Yes, my Lord.—How does your lordship?

Lady Boun. [*Aside to* Mrs. Sullen *and* Dorinda.] Lord! did you mind that, girls?

Aim. Where am I?

Arch. In very good hands, sir. You were taken just now with one of your old fits, under the trees, just by this good lady's house; her ladyship had you taken in, and has miraculously brought you to yourself, as you see.

Aim. I am so confounded with shame, madam, that I can now only beg pardon; and refer my acknowledgments for your ladyship's care till an opportunity offers of making some amends. I dare be no longer troublesome.—Martin! give two guineas to the servants. [*Going.*

Dor. Sir, you may catch cold by going so soon into the air; you don't look, sir, as if you were perfectly recovered.

[*Here* Archer *talks to* Lady Bountiful *in dumb show.*

Aim. That I shall never be, madam; my present illness is so rooted that I must expect to carry it to my grave.

Mrs. Sul. Don't despair, sir; I have known several in your distemper shake it off with a fortnight's physic.

Lady Boun. Come, sir, your servant has been telling me that you're apt to relapse if you go into the air: your good manners shan't get the better of ours—you shall sit down again, sir. Come, sir, we don't mind ceremonies in the country—here, sir, my service t'ye.—You shall taste my water; 'tis a cordial I can assure you, and of my own making—drink it off, sir.—[Aimwell *drinks.*] And how d'ye find yourself now, sir?

Aim. Somewhat better—though very faint still.

Lady Boun. Ay, ay, people are always faint after these fits.—Come, girls, you shall show the gentleman the house.—'Tis but an old family building, sir; but you had better walk about, and cool by degrees, than venture immediately into the air. You'll find some tolerable pictures.—Dorinda, show the gentleman the way. I must go to the poor woman below. [*Exit.*

Dor. This way, sir.

Aim. Ladies, shall I beg leave for my servant to wait on you, for he understands pictures very well?

Mrs. Sul. Sir, we understand originals as well as he does pictures, so he may come along.

[*Exeunt all but* Scrub, Aimwell *leading* Dorinda.

Enter Foigard.

Foi. Save you, Master Scrub!

Scrub. Sir, I won't be saved your way—

I hate a priest, I abhor the French, and I defy the devil. Sir, I'm a bold Briton, and will spill the last drop of my blood to keep out popery and slavery.

Foi. Master Scrub, you would put me down in politics, and so I would be speaking with Mrs. Shipsy.

Scrub. Good Mr. Priest, you can't speak with her; she's sick, sir, she's gone abroad, sir, she's—dead two months ago, sir.

Re-enter Gipsy.

Gip. How now, impudence! how dare you talk so saucily to the doctor?—Pray, sir, don't take it ill; for the common people of England are not so civil to strangers, as——

Scrub. You lie! you lie! 'tis the common people that are civilest to strangers.

Gip. Sirrah, I have a good mind to—get you out, I say!

Scrub. I won't.

Gip. You won't, sauce-box!—Pray, doctor, what is the captain's name that came to your inn last night?

Scrub. [*Aside.*] The captain! ah, the devil, there she hampers me again; the captain has me on one side, and the priest on t'other: so between the gown and the sword, I have a fine time on't.—But, *Cedunt arma togæ.* [*Going.*

Gip. What, sirrah, won't you march?

Scrub. No, my dear, I won't march—but I'll walk.—[*Aside.*] And I'll make bold to listen a little too.

[*Goes behind the side-scene and listens.*

Gip. Indeed, doctor, the Count has been barbarously treated, that's the truth on't.

Foi. Ah, Mrs. Gipsy, upon my shoul, now, gra, his complainings would mollify the marrow in your bones, and move the bowels of your commiseration! He veeps, and he dances, and he fistles, and he swears, and he laughs, and he stamps, and he sings; in conclusion, joy, he's afflicted *à-la-Française,* and a stranger would not know whider to cry or to laugh with him.

Gip. What would you have me do, doctor?

Foi. Noting, joy, but only hide the Count in Mrs. Sullen's closet when it is dark.

Gip. Nothing! is that nothing? It would be both a sin and a shame, doctor.

Foi. Here is twenty Lewidores, joy, for your shame and I will give you an absolution for the shin.

Gip. But won't that money look like a bribe?

Foi. Dat is according as you shall tauk it. If you receive the money beforehand, 'twill be *logicè,* a bribe; but if you stay till afterwards, 'twill be only a gratification.

Gip. Well, doctor, I'll take it *logicè.* But what must I do with my conscience, sir?

Foi. Leave dat wit me, joy; I am your priest, gra; and your conscience is under my hands.

Gip. But should I put the Count into the closet——

Foi. Vel, is dere any shin for a man's being in a closhet? one may go to prayers in a closhet.

Gip. But if the lady should come into her chamber, and go to bed?

Foi. Vel, and is dere any shin in going to bed, joy?

Gip. Ay, but if the parties should meet, doctor?

Foi. Vel den—the parties must be responsible. Do you be gone after putting the Count into the closhet; and leave the shins wid themselves. I will come with the Count to instruct you in your chamber.

Gip. Well, doctor, your religion is so pure! Methinks I'm so easy after an absolution, and can sin afresh with so much security, that I'm resolved to die a martyr to't. Here's the key of the garden door, come in the back way when 'tis late, I'll be ready to receive you; but don't so much as whisper, only take hold of my hand; I'll lead you, and do you lead the Count, and follow me. [*Exeunt.*

Scrub. [*Coming forward.*] What witchcraft now have these two imps of the devil been a-hatching here? "There's twenty Lewidores"; I heard that, and saw the purse.—But I must give room to my betters.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter Aimwell, *leading* Dorinda, *and making love in dumb show;* Mrs. Sullen *and* Archer.

Mrs. Sul. [*To* Archer.] Pray, sir, how d'ye like that piece?

Arch. Oh, 'tis Leda! You find, madam, how Jupiter comes disguised to make love——

Mrs. Sul. But what think you there of Alexander's battles?

Arch. We only want a Le Brun, madam, to draw greater battles, and a greater general of our own. The Danube, madam, would make a greater figure in a picture than the Granicus; and we have our Ramillies to match their Arbela.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, what head is that in the corner there?

Arch. O madam, 'tis poor Ovid in his exile.

Mrs. Sul. What was he banished for?

Arch. His ambitious love, madam.—[*Bowing.*] His misfortune touches me.

Mrs. Sul. Was he successful in his amours?

Arch. There he has left us in the dark. He was too much a gentleman to tell.

Mrs. Sul. If he were secret, I pity him.

Arch. And if he were successful, I envy him.

Mrs. Sul. How d'ye like that Venus over the chimney?

Arch. Venus! I protest, madam, I took it for your picture; but now I look again, 'tis not handsome enough.

Mrs. Sul. Oh, what a charm is flattery! If you would see my picture, there it is over that cabinet. How d'ye like it?

Arch. I must admire anything, madam, that has the least resemblance of you. But, methinks, madam—[*He looks at the picture and* Mrs. Sullen *three or four times, by turns.*] Pray, madam, who drew it?

Mrs. Sul. A famous hand, sir.

[*Here* Aimwell *and* Dorinda *go off.*

Arch. A famous hand, madam!—Your eyes, indeed, are featured there; but where's the sparking moisture, shining fluid, in which they swim? The picture, indeed, has your dimples; but where's the swarm of killing Cupids that should ambush there? The lips too are figured out; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness that tempts the taste in the original?

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] Had it been my lot to have matched with such a man!

Arch. Your breasts too—presumptuous man! what, paint Heaven!—Apropos, madam, in the very next picture is Salmoneus, that was struck dead with lightning, for offering to imitate Jove's thunder; I hope you served the painter so, madam?

Mrs. Sul. Had my eyes the power of thunder, they should employ their lightning better.

Arch. There's the finest bed in that room, madam! I suppose 'tis your ladyship's bedchamber.

Mrs. Sul. And what then, sir?

Arch. I think the quilt is the richest that ever I saw. I can't at this distance, madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery; will you give me leave, madam?

[*Goes into the chamber.*

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] The devil take his impudence!—Sure, if I gave him an opportunity, he durst not offer it?—I have a great mind to try.—[*Going in, returns.*] S'death, what am I doing?—And alone, too!—Sister! sister! [*Runs out.*

Arch. [*Coming out.*] I'll follow her close—
For where a Frenchman durst attempt to storm,
A Briton sure may well the work perform.
[*Going.*

Re-enter Scrub.

Scrub. Martin! brother Martin!

Arch. O brother Scrub, I beg your pardon, I was not a-going: here's a guinea my master ordered you.

Scrub. A guinea! hi! hi! hi! a guinea! eh—by this light it is a guinea! But I suppose you expect one-and-twenty shillings in change?

Arch. Not at all; I have another for Gipsy.

Scrub. A guinea for her! Faggot and fire for the witch! Sir, give me that guinea, and I'll discover a plot.

Arch. A plot!

Scrub. Ay, sir, a plot, and a horrid plot! First, it must be a plot, because there's a woman in't: secondly, it must be a plot, because there's a priest in't: thirdly, it must be a plot, because there's French gold in't: and fourthly, it must be a plot, because I don't know what to make on't.

Arch. Nor anybody else, I'm afraid, brother Scrub.

Scrub. Truly, I'm afraid so too; for where there's a priest and a woman, there's always a mystery and a riddle. This I know, that here has been the doctor with a temptation in one hand and an absolution in the other, and Gipsy has sold herself to the devil; I saw the price paid down, my eyes shall take their oath on't.

Arch. And is all this bustle about Gipsy?

Scrub. That's not all; I could hear but a word here and there; but I remember they mentioned a Count, a closet, a back-door, and a key.

Arch. The Count!—Did you hear nothing of Mrs. Sullen?

Scrub. I did hear some word that sounded that way; but whether it was Sullen or Dorinda, I could not distinguish.

Arch. You have told this matter to nobody, brother?

Scrub. Told! no, sir, I thank you for that; I'm resolved never to speak one word *pro* nor *con*, till we have a peace.

Arch. You're i' the right, brother Scrub. Here's a treaty afoot between the Count and the lady: the priest and the chambermaid are the plenipotentiaries. It shall go hard but I find a way to be included in the treaty.—Where's the doctor now?

Scrub. He and Gipsy are this moment devouring my lady's marmalade in the closet.

Aim. [*From without.*] Martin! Martin!

Arch. I come, sir, I come.

Scrub. But you forget the other guinea, Brother Martin.

Arch. Here, I give it with all my heart.

Scrub. And I take it with all my soul.—[*Exit* Archer.] Ecod, I'll spoil your plotting, Mrs. Gipsy! and if you should set the captain upon me, these two guineas will buy me off. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Mrs. Sullen *and* Dorinda, *meeting.*

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister!

Dor. And well, sister!

Mrs. Sul. What's become of my lord?

Dor. What's become of his servant?

Mrs. Sul. Servant! he's a prettier fellow, and a finer gentleman by fifty degrees, than his master.

Dor. O' my conscience, I fancy you could beg that fellow at the gallows-foot!

Mrs. Sul. O' my conscience I could, provided I could put a friend of yours in his room.

Dor. You desired me, sister, to leave you, when you transgressed the bounds of honor.

Mrs. Sul. Thou dear censorious country girl! what dost mean? You can't think of the man without the bedfellow, I find.

Dor. I don't find anything unnatural in that thought: while the mind is conversant with flesh and blood, it must conform to the humors of the company.

Mrs. Sul. How a little love and good company improves a woman! Why, child, you begin to live—you never spoke before.

Dor. Because I was never spoke to.—My lord has told me that I have more wit and beauty than any of my sex; and truly I begin to think the man is sincere.

Mrs. Sul. You're in the right, Dorinda; pride is the life of a woman, and flattery is our daily bread; and she's a fool that won't believe a man there, as much as she that believes him in anything else. But I'll lay you a guinea that I had finer things said to me than you had.

Dor. Done! What did your fellow say to ye?

Mrs. Sul. My fellow took the picture of Venus for mine.

Dor. But my lover took me for Venus herself.

Mrs. Sul. Common cant! Had my spark called me a Venus directly, I should have believed him a footman in good earnest.

Dor. But my lover was upon his knees to me.

Mrs. Sul. And mine was upon his tiptoes to me.

Dor. Mine vowed to die for me.

Mrs. Sul. Mine swore to die with me.

Dor. Mine spoke the softest moving things.

Mrs. Sul. Mine had his moving things too.

Dor. Mine kissed my hand ten thousand times.

Mrs. Sul. Mine has all that pleasure to come.

Dor. Mine offered marriage.

Mrs. Sul. O Lard! d'ye call that a moving thing?

Dor. The sharpest arrow in his quiver. my dear sister! Why, my ten thousand pounds may lie brooding here this seven years, and hatch nothing at last but some ill-natured clown like yours. Whereas, if I marry my Lord Aimwell, there will be title, place, and precedence, the Park, the play, and the drawing-room, splendor, equipage, noise, and flambeaux.—*Hey, my Lady Aimwell's servants there!—Lights, lights to the stairs!—My Lady Aimwell's coach put forward!—Stand by, make room for her ladyship!*—Are not these things moving?—What! melancholy of a sudden?

Mrs. Sul. Happy, happy sister! your angel has been watchful for your happiness, whilst mine has slept regardless of his charge. Long smiling years of circling joys for you, but not one hour for me! [*Weeps.*

Dor. Come, my dear, we'll talk of something else.

Mrs. Sul. O Dorinda! I own myself a woman, full of my sex, a gentle, generous soul, easy and yielding to soft desires; a spacious heart, where love and all his train might lodge. And must the fair apartment of my breast be made a stable for a brute to lie in?

Dor. Meaning your husband, I suppose?

Mrs. Sul. Husband! no; even husband is too soft a name for him.—But, come, I expect my brother here to-night or to-morrow; he was abroad when my father married me; perhaps he'll find a way to make me easy.

Dor. Will you promise not to make yourself easy in the meantime with my lord's friend?

Mrs. Sul. You mistake me, sister. It happens with us as among the men, the greatest talkers are the greatest cowards? and there's a reason for it; those spirits evaporate in prattle, which might do more mischief if they took another course.—Though, to confess the truth, I do love that fellow;—and if I met him dressed as he should be, and I undressed as I should be—look'ee, sister, I have no supernatural gifts—I can't swear I could resist the temptation; though I can safely promise to avoid it; and that's as much as the best of us can do.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

A Room in Boniface's *Inn.*

Enter Aimwell *and* Archer *laughing.*

Arch. And the awkward kindness of the good motherly old gentlewoman——

Aim. And the coming easiness of the young one—'Sdeath, 'tis pity to deceive her!

Arch. Nay, if you adhere to these principles, stop where you are.

Aim. I can't stop; for I love her to distraction.

Arch. 'Sdeath, if you love her a hair's-breath beyond discretion, you must go no further.

Aim. Well, well, anything to deliver us

from sauntering away our idle evenings at White's, Tom's, or Will's, and be stinted to bare looking at our old acquaintance, the cards; because our impotent pockets can't afford us a guinea for the mercenary drabs.

Arch. Or be obliged to some purse-proud coxcomb for a scandalous bottle, where we must not pretend to our share of the discourse, because we can't pay our club o' th' reckoning.—Damn it, I had rather sponge upon Morris, and sup upon a dish of bohea scored behind the door!

Aim. And there expose our want of sense by talking criticisms, as we should our want of money by railing at the government.

Arch. Or be obliged to sneak into the side-box, and between both houses steal two acts of a play, and because we han't money to see the other three, we come away discontented, and damn the whole five.

Aim. And ten thousand such rascally tricks—had we outlived our fortunes among our acquaintance.—But now——

Arch. Ay, now is the time to prevent all this:—strike while the iron is hot.—This priest is the luckiest part of our adventure; he shall marry you, and pimp for me.

Aim. But I should not like a woman that can be so fond of a Frenchman.

Arch. Alas, sir! Necessity has no law. The lady may be in distress; perhaps she has a confounded husband, and her revenge may carry her farther than her love. Egad, I have so good an opinion of her, and of myself, that I begin to fancy strange things: and we must say this for the honor of our women, and indeed of ourselves, that they do stick to their men as they do to their *Magna Charta*. If the plot lies as I suspect, I must put on the gentleman.—But here comes the doctor—I shall be ready. [*Exit.*

Enter FOIGARD.

Foi. Sauve you, noble friend.

Aim. O sir, your servant! Pray, doctor, may I crave your name?

Foi. Fat naam is upon me? My naam is Foigard, joy.

Aim. Foigard! a very good name for a clergyman. Pray, Doctor Foigard, were you ever in Ireland?

Foi. Ireland! no, joy. Fat sort of plaace is dat saam Ireland? Dey say de people are catched dere when dey are young.

Aim. And some of 'em when they are old:—as for example.—[*Takes* FOIGARD *by the shoulder.*] Sir, I arrest you as a traitor against the government; you're a subject of England, and this morning showed me a commission, by which you served as chaplain in the French army. This is death by our law, and your reverence must hang for it.

Foi. Upon my shoul, noble friend, dis is strange news you tell me! Fader Foigard a subject of England! de son of a burgomaster of Brussels, a subject of England! ubooboo——

Aim. The son of a bog-trotter in Ireland! Sir, your tongue will condemn you before any bench in the kingdom.

Foi. And is my tongue all your evidensh, joy?

Aim. That's enough.

Foi. No, no, joy, for I vill never spake English no more.

Aim. Sir, I have other evidence.—Here, Martin!

Re-enter ARCHER.

You know this fellow?

Arch. [*In a brogue.*] Saave you, my dear cussen, how does your health?

Foi. [*Aside.*] Ah! upon my shoul dere is my countryman, and his brogue will hang mine.—[*To* ARCHER.] *Mynheer, Ick wet neat watt hey zacht, Ick universtон ewe neat, sacramant!*

Aim. Altering your language won't do, sir; this fellow knows your person, and will swear to your face.

Foi. Faash! fey, is dere a brogue upon my faash too?

Arch. Upon my soulvation dere ish, joy!—But cussen Mackshane, vil you not put a remembrance upon me?

Foi. [*Aside.*] Mackshane! by St. Patrick, dat ish my naam shure enough.

Aim. [*Aside to* ARCHER.] I fancy, Archer, you have it.

Foi. The devil hang you, joy! by fat acquaintance are you my cussen?

Arch. Oh, de devil hang yourshelf, joy! you know we were little boys togeder upon de school, and your foster-moder's son was married upon my nurse's chister, joy, and so we are Irish cussens.

Foi. De devil taake de relation! Vel, joy, and fat school was it?

Arch. I tinks it vas—aay—'twas Tipperary.

Foi. No, no, joy; it vas Kilkenny.

Aim. That's enough for us—self-confession.—Come, sir, we must deliver you into the hands of the next magistrate.

Arch. He sends you to jail, you're tried next assizes, and away you go swing into purgatory.

Foi. And is it so wid you, cussen?

Arch. It vil be sho wid you, cussen, if you don't immediately confess the secret between you and Mrs. Gipsy. Look'ee, sir, the gallows or the secret, take your choice.

Foi. The gallows! upon my shoul I hate that saam gallow, for it is a diseash dat is fatal to our family. Vel, den, dere is nothing, shentlemens, but Mrs. Shullen would spaak wid the Count in her chamber

at midnight, and dere is no haarm, joy, for I am to conduct the Count to the plash, myshelf.

Arch. As I guessed.—Have you communicated the matter to the Count?

Foi. I have not sheen him since.

Arch. Right again! Why then, doctor—you shall conduct me to the lady instead of the Count.

Foi. Fat, my cussen to the lady! upon my shoul, gra, dat is too much upon the brogue.

Arch. Come, come, doctor; consider we have got a rope about your neck, and if you offer to squeak, we'll stop your windpipe, most certainly. We shall have another job for you in a day or two, I hope.

Aim. Here's company coming this way; let's into my chamber, and there concert our affairs farther.

Arch. Come, my dear cussen, come along. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Boniface, Hounslow, *and* Bagshot *at one door,* Gibbet *at the opposite.*

Gib. Well, gentlemen, 'tis a fine night for our enterprise.

Houn. Dark as hell.

Bag. And blows like the devil; our landlord here has showed us the window where we must break in, and tells us the plate stands in the wainscot cupboard in the parlor.

Bon. Ay, ay, Mr. Bagshot, as the saying is, knives and forks, and cups and cans, and tumblers and tankards. There's one tankard, as the saying is, that's near upon as big as me; it was a present to the squire from his godmother, and smells of nutmeg and toast like an East-India ship.

Houn. Then you say we must divide at the stairhead?

Bon. Yes, Mr. Hounslow, as the saying is. At one end of that gallery lies my Lady Bountiful and her daughter, and at the other Mrs. Sullen. As for the squire——

Gib. He's safe enough, I have fairly entered him, and he's more than half seas over already. But such a parcel of scoundrels are got about him now, that, egad, I was ashamed to be seen in their company.

Bon. 'Tis now twelve, as the saying is—gentlemen, you must set out at one.

Gib. Hounslow, do you and Bagshot see our arms fixed, and I'll come to you presently.

Houn., Bag. We will. [*Exeunt.*

Gib. Well, my dear Bonny, you assure me that Scrub is a coward?

Bon. A chicken, as the saying is. You'll have no creature to deal with but the ladies.

Gib. And I can assure you, friend, there's a great deal of address and good manners in robbing a lady; I am the most a gentleman that way that ever travelled the road.—But, my dear Bonny, this prize will be a galleon, a Vigo business.—I warrant you we shall bring off three or four thousand pounds.

Bon. In plate, jewels, and money, as the saying is, you may.

Gib. Why then, Tyburn, I defy thee! I'll get up to town, sell off my horse and arms, buy myself some pretty employment in the household, and be as snug and as honest as any courtier of 'em all.

Bon. And what think you then of my daughter Cherry for a wife?

Gib. Look'ee, my dear Bonny—Cherry *is the Goddess I adore,* as the song goes; but it is a maxim, that man and wife should never have it in their power to hang one another; for if they should, the Lord have mercy on 'em both! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I

A Room in Boniface's *Inn.*

Knocking without, enter Boniface.

Bon. Coming! Coming!—A coach and six foaming horses at this time o'night! some great man, as the saying is, for he scorns to travel with other people.

Enter Sir Charles Freeman.

Sir Chas. What, fellow! a public house, and abed when other people sleep?

Bon. Sir, I an't abed, as the saying is.

Sir Chas. Is Mr. Sullen's family abed, think'ee?

Bon. All but the squire himself, sir, as the saying is; he's in the house.

Sir Chas. What company has he?

Bon. Why, sir, there's the constable, Mr. Gage the exciseman, the hunch-backed barber, and two or three other gentlemen.

Sir Chas. [*Aside.*] I find my sister's letters gave me the true picture of her spouse.

Enter Sullen, *drunk.*

Bon. Sir, here's the squire.

Squire Sul. The puppies left me asleep.—Sir!

Sir Chas. Well, sir.

Squire Sul. Sir, I am an unfortunate man—I have three thousand pounds a year, and I can't get a man to drink a cup of ale with me.

Sir Chas. That's very hard.

Squire Sul. Ay, sir; and unless you have pity upon me, and smoke one pipe with me, I must e'en go home to my wife, and I had rather go to the devil by half.

Sir Chas. But I presume, sir, you won't see your wife to-night; she'll be gone to

bed. You don't use to lie with your wife in that pickle?

Squire Sul. What! not lie with my wife! Why, sir, do you take me for an atheist or a rake?

Sir Chas. If you hate her, sir, I think you had better lie from her.

Squire Sul. I think so too, friend. But I'm a Justice of peace, and must do nothing against the law.

Sir Chas. Law! as I take it, Mr. Justice, nobody observes law for law's sake, only for the good of those for whom it was made.

Squire Sul. But, if the law orders me to send you to jail, you must lie there, my friend.

Sir Chas. Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

Squire Sul. A crime? 'oons, an't I married?

Sir Chas. Nay, sir, if you call a marriage a crime, you must disown it for a law.

Squire Sul. Eh! I must be acquainted with you, sir.—But, sir, I should be very glad to know the truth of this matter.

Sir Chas. Truth, sir, is a profound sea, and few there be that dare wade deep enough to find out the bottom on't. Besides, sir, I'm afraid the line of your understanding mayn't be long enough.

Squire Sul. Look'ee, sir, I have nothing to say to your sea of truth, but, if a good parcel of land can entitle a man to a little truth, I have much as any he in the country.

Bon. I never heard your worship, as the saying is, talk so much before.

Squire Sul. Because I never met with a man that I liked before.

Bon. Pray, sir, as the saying is, let me ask you one question: are not man and wife one flesh?

Sir Chas. You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because ye are nothing else; but rational creatures have minds that must be united.

Squire Sul. Minds!

Sir Chas. Ay, minds, sir; don't you think that the mind takes place of the body?

Squire Sul. In some people.

Sir Chas. Then the interest of the master must be consulted before that of his servant.

Squire Sul. Sir, you shall dine with me to-morrow!—'Oons, I always thought that we were naturally one.

Sir Chas. Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they love one another, kiss one another, help one another in all the actions of life; but I could not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

Squire Sul. Then 'tis plain that we are two.

Sir Chas. Why don't you part with her, sir?

Squire Sul. Will you take her, sir?

Sir Chas. With all my heart.

Squire Sul. You shall have her to-morrow morning, and a venison-pasty into the bargain.

Sir Chas. You'll let me have her fortune too?

Squire Sul. Fortune! why, sir, I have no quarrel at her fortune: I only hate the woman, sir, and none but the woman shall go.

Sir Chas. But her fortune, sir——

Squire Sul. Can you play at whisk, sir?

Sir Chas. No, truly, sir.

Squire Sul. Nor at all-fours?

Sir Chas. Neither.

Squire Sul. [*Aside.*]. 'Oons! where was this man bred?—[*Aloud.*] Burn me, sir! I can't go home, 'tis but two a clock.

Sir Chas. For half an hour, sir, if you please; but you must consider 'tis late.

Squire Sul. Late! that's the reason I can't go to bed.—Come, sir! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Cherry, *runs across the stage, and knocks at* Aimwell's *chamber door. Enter* Aimwell *in his nightcap and gown.*

Aim. What's the matter? You tremble, child; you're frighted.

Cher. No wonder, sir—But, in short, sir, this very minute a gang of rogues are gone to rob my Lady Bountiful's house.

Aim. How!

Cher. I dogged 'em to the very door, and left 'em breaking in.

Aim. Have you alarmed anybody else with the news?

Cher. No, no, sir, I wanted to have discovered the whole plot, and twenty other things, to your man Martin; but I have searched the whole house, and can't find him! Where is he?

Aim. No matter, child; will you guide me immediately to the house?

Cher. With all my heart, sir; my Lady Bountiful is my godmother, and I love Mrs. Dorinda so well——

Aim. Dorinda! the name inspires me, the glory and the danger shall be all my own.—Come, my life, let me but get my sword. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

A Bedchamber in Lady Bountiful's *House.*

Enter Mrs. Sullen *and* Dorinda *undressed; a table and lights.*

Dor. 'Tis very late, sister, no news of your spouse yet?

Mrs. Sul. No. I'm condemned to be alone till towards four, and then perhaps I may be executed with his company.

Dor. Well, my dear, I'll leave you to your rest. You'll go directly to bed, I suppose?

Mrs. Sul. I don't know what to do.—Heigh-ho!

Dor. That's a desiring sigh, sister.

Mrs. Sul. This is a languishing hour, sister.

Dor. And might prove a critical minute if the pretty fellow were here.

Mrs. Sul. Here! what, in my bedchamber at two o'clock o' th' morning, I undressed, the family asleep, my hated husband abroad, and my lovely fellow at my feet!—O gad, sister!

Dor. Thoughts are free, sister, and them I allow you.—So, my dear, good night.

Mrs. Sul. A good rest to my dear Dorinda!—[*Exit* DORINDA.] Thoughts free! are they so? Why, then, suppose him here, dressed like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom,

[*Here* ARCHER *steals out of the closet.* with tongue enchanting, eyes bewitching, knees imploring.—[*Turns a little on one side and sees* ARCHER *in the posture she describes.*] —Ah!—[*Shrieks, and runs to the other side of the stage.*] Have my thoughts raised a spirit?—What are you, sir, a man or a devil?

Arch. A man, a man, madam. [*Rising.*

Mrs. Sul. How shall I be sure of it?

Arch. Madam, I'll give you demonstration this minute. [*Takes her hand.*

Mrs. Sul. What, sir! do you intend to be rude?

Arch. Yes, madam, if you please.

Mrs. Sul. In the name of wonder, whence came ye?

Arch. From the skies, madam—I'm a Jupiter in love, and you shall be my Alcmena.

Mrs. Sul. How came you in?

Arch. I flew in at the window, madam; your cousin Cupid lent me his wings, and your sister Venus opened the casement.

Mrs. Sul. I'm struck dumb with admiration!

Arch. And I—with wonder!

[*Looks passionately at her.*

Mrs. Sul. What will become of me?

Arch. How beautiful she looks!—The teeming jolly Spring smiles in her blooming face, and, when she was conceived, her mother smelt to roses, looked on lilies—

Lilies unfold their white, their fragrant charms,
When the warm sun thus darts into their arms. [*Runs to her.*

Mrs. Sul. Ah! [*Shrieks.*

Arch. 'Oons, madam, what d'ye mean? you'll raise the house.

Mrs. Sul. Sir, I'll wake the dead before I bear this!—What! approach me with the freedoms of a keeper! I'm glad on't, your impudence has cured me.

Arch. If this be impudence—[*Kneels.*] I leave to your partial self; no panting pilgrim, after a tedious, painful voyage, e'er bowed before his saint with more devotion.

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] Now, now, I'm ruined if he kneels!—[*Aloud.*] Rise, thou prostrate engineer, not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart.—Rise, and know I am a woman without my sex; I can love to all the tenderness of wishes, sighs, and tears—but go no farther.—Still, to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness even for you, but——

Arch. For me! [*Going to lay hold on her.*

Mrs. Sul. Hold, sir! build not upon that; for my most mortal hatred follows if you disobey what I command you now.—Leave me this minute.—[*Aside.*] If he denies, I'm lost.

Arch. Then you'll promise——

Mrs. Sul. Anything another time.

Arch. When shall I come?

Mrs. Sul. To-morrow—when you will.

Arch. Your lips must seal the promise.

Mrs. Sul. Psha!

Arch. They must! they must! [*Kisses her.*]—Raptures and paradise!—And why not now, my angel? the time, the place, silence, and secrecy, all conspire. And the now conscious stars have preordained this moment for my happiness. [*Takes her in his arms.*

Mrs. Sul. You will not! cannot, sure!

Arch. If the sun rides fast, and disappoints not mortals of to-morrow's dawn, this night shall crown my joys.

Mrs. Sul. My sex's pride assist me!

Arch. My sex's strength help me!

Mrs. Sul. You shall kill me first!

Arch. I'll die with you.

[*Carrying her off.*

Mrs. Sul. Thieves! thieves! murder!

Enter SCRUB *in his breeches, and one shoe.*

Scrub. Thieves! thieves! murder! popery!

Arch. Ha! the very timorous stag will kill in rutting time.

[*Draws, and offers to stab* SCRUB.

Scrub. [*Kneeling.*] O pray, sir, spare all I have, and take my life!

Mrs. Sul. [*Holding* ARCHER'S *hand.*] What does the fellow mean?

Scrub. O madam, down upon your knees, your marrow-bones!—he's one of 'em.

Arch. Of whom?

Scrub. One of the rogues—I beg your pardon, one of the honest gentlemen that just now are broke into the house.

Arch. How!

Mrs. Sul. I hope you did not come to rob me?

Arch. Indeed I did, madam, but I would have taken nothing but what you might ha' spared; but your crying "Thieves" has

waked this dreaming fool, and so he takes 'em for granted.

Scrub. Granted! 'tis granted, sir; take all we have.

Mrs. Sul. The fellow looks as if he were broke out of Bedlam.

Scrub. 'Oons, madam, they're broke into the house with fire and sword! I saw them, heard them; they'll be here this minute.

Arch. What, thieves!

Scrub. Under favor, sir, I think so.

Mrs. Sul. What shall we do, sir?

Arch. Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

Mrs. Sul. Will you leave me?

Arch. Leave you! Lord, madam, did not you command me to be gone just now, upon pain of your immortal hatred?

Mrs. Sul. Nay, but pray, sir——

[*Takes hold of him.*

Arch. Ha! ha! ha! now comes my turn to be ravished.—You see now, madam, you must use men one way or other; but take this by the way, good madam, that none but a fool will give you the benefit of his courage, unless you'll take his love along with it.—How are they armed, friend?

Scrub. With sword and pistol, sir.

Arch. Hush!—I see a dark lantern coming through the gallery.—Madam, be assured I will protect you, or lose my life.

Mrs. Sul. Your life! no, sir, they can rob me of nothing that I value half so much; therefore now, sir, let me entreat you to be gone.

Arch. No, madam, I'll consult my own safety for the sake of yours; I'll work by stratagem. Have you courage enough to stand the appearance of 'em?

Mrs. Sul. Yes, yes, since I have scaped your hands, I can face anything.

Arch. Come hither, brother Scrub! don't you know me?

Scrub. Eh, my dear brother, let me kiss thee. [*Kisses* ARCHER.

Arch. This way—here——

[ARCHER *and* SCRUB *hide behind the bed.*

Enter GIBBET, *with a dark lantern in one hand, and a pistol in the other.*

Gib. Ay, ay, this is the chamber, and the lady alone.

Mrs. Sul. Who are you, sir? what would you have? d'ye come to rob me?

Gib. Rob you! alack a day, madam, I'm only a younger brother, madam; and so, madam, if you make a noise, I'll shoot you through the head; but don't be afraid, madam.—[*Laying his lantern and pistol upon the table.*] These rings, madam; don't be concerned, madam, I have a profound respect for you, madam; your keys, madam; don't be frighted, madam, I'm the most of a gentleman.—[*Searching her pockets.*] This necklace, madam; I never was rude to any lady;—I have a veneration—for this necklace——

[*Here* ARCHER *having come round, and seized the pistol, takes* GIBBET *by the collar, trips up his heels, and claps the pistol to his breast.*

Arch. Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege!

Gib. Oh! pray, sir, don't kill me; I an't prepared.

Arch. How many is there of 'em, Scrub?

Scrub. Five-and-forty, sir.

Arch. Then I must kill the villain, to have him out of the way.

Gib. Hold, hold, sir, we are but three, upon my honor.

Arch. Scrub, will you undertake to secure him?

Scrub. Not I, sir; kill him, kill him!

Arch. Run to Gipsy's chamber, there you'll find the doctor; bring him hither presently.—[*Exit* SCRUB, *running.*] Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

Gib. Sir, I have no prayer at all; the government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, don't kill him: you fright me as much as him.

Arch. The dog shall die, madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment.—Sirrah, this moment is your last.

Gib. Sir, I'll give you two hundred pounds to spare my life.

Arch. Have you no more, rascal?

Gib. Yes, sir, I can command four hundred, but I must reserve two of 'em to save my life at the sessions.

Re-enter SCRUB *with* FOIGARD.

Arch. Here, doctor, I suppose Scrub and you between you may manage him. Lay hold of him, doctor.

[FOIGARD *lays hold of* GIBBET.

Gib. What! turned over to the priest already!—Look'ee, doctor, you come before your time; I an't condemned yet, I thank ye.

Foi. Come, my dear joy, I vill secure your body and your shoul too; I vill make you a good catholic, and give you an absolution.

Gib. Absolution! can you procure me a pardon, doctor?

Foi. No, joy.

Gib. Then you and your absolution may go to the devil!

Arch. Convey him into the cellar, there bind him:—take the pistol, and if he offers to resist, shoot him through the head—and come back to us with all the speed you can.

Scrub. Ay, ay, come, doctor, do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him.

[*Exit* FOIGARD *with* GIBBET, SCRUB *following.*

Mrs. Sul. But how came the doctor——

Arch. In short, madam—[*Shrieking without.*] 'Sdeath! the rogues are at work with the other ladies—I'm vexed I parted with the pistol; but I must fly to their assistance.—Will you stay here, madam, or venture yourself with me?

Mrs. Sul. [*Taking him by the arm.*] Oh, with you, dear sir, with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Another Apartment in the Same House.

Enter HOUNSLOW *dragging in* LADY BOUNTIFUL *and* BAGSHOT *haling in* DORINDA; *the rogues with swords drawn.*

Houn. Come, come, your jewels, mistress!

Bag. Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman!

Enter AIMWELL *and* CHERRY.

Aim. Turn this way, villains! I durst engage an army in such a cause.

[*He engages them both.*

Dor. O madam, had I but a sword to help the brave man!

Lady Boun. There's three or four hanging up in the hall; but they won't draw. I'll go fetch one, however. [*Exit.*

Enter ARCHER *and* MRS. SULLEN.

Arch. Hold, hold, my lord! every man his bird, pray.

[*They engage man to man; the rogues are thrown and disarmed.*

Cher. [*Aside.*] What! the rogues taken! then they'll impeach my father: I must give him timely notice. [*Runs out.*

Arch. Shall we kill the rogues?

Aim. No, no, we'll bind them.

Arch. Ay, ay.—[*To* MRS. SULLEN, *who stands by him.*] Here, madam, lend me your garter.

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] The devil's in this fellow! he fights, loves, and banters, all in a breath.—[*Aloud.*] Here's a cord that the rogues brought with 'em, I suppose.

Arch. Right, right, the rogue's destiny, a rope to hang himself.—Come, my lord—this is but a scandalous sort of an office [*Binding the rogues together*], if our adventures should end in this sort of hangman-work; but I hope there is something in prospect, that——

Enter SCRUB.

Arch. Well, Scrub, have you secured your Tartar?

Scrub. Yes, sir, I left the priest and him disputing about religion.

Aim. And pray carry these gentlemen to reap the benefit of the controversy.

[*Delivers the prisoners to* SCRUB, *who leads them out.*

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sister, how came my lord here?

Dor. And pray, how came the gentleman here?

Mrs. Sul. I'll tell you the greatest piece of villainy—— [*They talk in dumb show.*

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have been more successful in your adventures than the housebreakers.

Arch. No matter for my adventure, yours is the principal.—Press her this minute to marry you—now while she's hurried between the palpitation of her fear and the joy of her deliverance, now while the tide of her spirits is at high-flood—throw yourself at her feet, speak some romantic nonsense or other—address her, like Alexander in the height of his victory, confound her senses, bear down her reason, and away with her.—The priest is now in the cellar, and dare not refuse to do the work.

Re-enter LADY BOUNTIFUL.

Aim. But how shall I get off without being observed?

Arch. You a lover, and not find a way to get off!—Let me see——

Aim. You bleed, Archer.

Arch. 'Sdeath, I'm glad on't; this wound will do the business. I'll amuse the old lady and Mrs. Sullen about dressing my wound, while you carry off Dorinda.

Lady Boun. Gentlemen, could we understand how you would be gratified for the services——

Arch. Come, come, my lady, this is no time for compliments; I'm wounded, madam.

Lady Boun., Mrs. Sul. How! wounded!

Dor. I hope, sir, you have received no hurt?

Aim. None but what you may cure——

[*Makes love in dumb show.*

Lady Boun. Let me see your arm, sir—I must have some powder-sugar to stop the blood.—O me! an ugly gash; upon my word, sir, you must go into bed.

Arch. Ay, my lady, a bed would do very well.—[*To* MRS. SULLEN.] Madam, will you do me the favor to conduct me to a chamber.

Lady Boun. Do, do, daughter—while I get the lint and the probe and the plaster ready.

[*Runs out one way,* AIMWELL *carries off* DORINDA *another.*

Arch. Come, madam, why don't you obey your mother's commands?

Mrs. Sul. How can you, after what is passed, have the confidence to ask me?

Arch. And if you go to that, how can you, after what is passed, have the con-

fidence to deny me? Was not this blood shed in your defence, and my life exposed for your protection? Look ye, madam, I'm none of your romantic fools, that fight giants and monsters for nothing; my valor is downright Swiss; I'm a soldier of fortune, and must be paid.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis ungenerous in you, sir, to upbraid me with your services!

Arch. 'Tis ungenerous in you, madam, not to reward 'em.

Mrs. Sul. How! at the expense of my honor?

Arch. Honor! can honor consist with ingratitude? If you would deal like a woman of honor, do like a man of honor. D'ye think I would deny you in such a case?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, my lady ordered me to tell you, that your brother is below at the gate. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. My brother! Heavens be praised!—Sir, he shall thank you for your services; he has it in his power.

Arch. Who is your brother, madam?

Mrs. Sul. Sir Charles Freeman.—You'll excuse me, sir; I must go and receive him. [*Exit.*

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman! 'sdeath and hell! my old acquaintance. Now unless Aimwell has made good use of his time, all our fair machine goes souse into the sea like the Eddystone. [*Exit.*

Scene IV

The Gallery in the Same House.

Enter Aimwell *and* Dorinda.

Dor. Well, well, my lord, you have conquered; your late generous action will, I hope, plead for my easy yielding; though I must own, your lordship had a friend in the fort before.

Aim. The sweets of Hybla dwell upon her tongue!—Here, doctor—

Enter Foigard, *with a book.*

Foi. Are you prepared boat?

Dor. I'm ready. But first, my lord, one word.—I have a frightful example of a hasty marriage in my own family; when I reflect upon't it shocks me. Pray, my lord, consider a little——

Aim. Consider! do you doubt my honor or my love?

Dor. Neither: I do believe you equally just as brave: and were your whole sex drawn out for me to choose, I should not cast a look upon the multitude if you were absent. But, my lord, I'm a woman; colors, concealments may hide a thousand faults in me, therefore know me better first. I hardly dare affirm I know myself in anything except my love.

Aim. [*Aside.*] Such goodness who could injure! I find myself unequal to the task of villain; she has gained my soul, and made it honest like her own.—I cannot, cannot hurt her.—[*Aloud.*] Doctor, retire.—[*Exit* Foigard.] Madam, behold your lover and your proselyte, and judge of my passion by my conversion!—I'm all a lie, nor dare I give a fiction to your arms; I'm all counterfeit, except my passion.

Dor. Forbid it, Heaven! a counterfeit!

Aim. I am no lord, but a poor needy man, come with a mean, a scandalous design to prey upon your fortune; but the beauties of your mind and person have so won me from myself that, like a trusty servant, I prefer the interest of my mistress to my own.

Dor. Sure I have had the dream of some poor mariner, a sleepy image of a welcome port, and wake involved in storms!—Pray, sir, who are you?

Aim. Brother to the man whose title I usurped, but stranger to his honor or his fortune.

Dor. Matchless honesty!—Once I was proud, sir, of your wealth and title, but now am prouder that you want it: now I can show my love was justly levelled, and had no aim but love.—Doctor, come in.

Enter Foigard *at one door,* Gipsy *at another, who whispers* Dorinda.

[*To* Foigard.] Your pardon, sir, we shannot want you now.—[*To* Aimwell.] Sir, you must excuse me—I'll wait on you presently. [*Exit with* Gipsy.

Foi. Upon my shoul, now, dis is foolish. [*Exit.*

Aim. Gone! and bid the priest depart!—It has an ominous look.

Enter Archer.

Arch. Courage, Tom!—Shall I wish you joy?

Aim. No.

Arch. 'Oons, man, what ha' you been doing?

Aim. O Archer! my honesty, I fear, has ruined me.

Arch. How?

Aim. I have discovered myself.

Arch. Discovered! and without my consent? What! have I embarked my small remains in the same bottom with yours, and you dispose of all without my partnership?

Aim. O Archer! I own my fault.

Arch. After conviction—'tis then too late for pardon.—You may remember, Mr. Aimwell, that you proposed this folly: as you begun, so end it. Henceforth I'll hunt my fortune single—so farewell!

Aim. Stay, my dear Archer, but a minute.

Arch. Stay! what, to be despised, exposed, and laughed at! No, I would sooner change conditions with the worst of the rogues we just now bound, than bear one scornful smile from the proud knight that once I treated as my equal.

Aim. What knight?

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman, brother to the lady that I had almost—but no matter for that, 'tis a cursed night's work, and so I leave you to make the best on't.

[*Going.*

Aim. Freeman!—One word, Archer. Still I have hopes; methought she received my confession with pleasure.

Arch. 'Sdeath, who doubts it?

Aim. She consented after to the match; and still I dare believe she will be just.

Arch. To herself, I warrant her, as you should have been.

Aim. By all my hopes she comes, and smiling comes!

Re-enter Dorinda, *mighty gay.*

Dor. Come, my dear lord—I fly with impatience to your arms—the minutes of my absence were a tedious year. Where's this priest?

Re-enter Foigard.

Arch. 'Oons, a brave girl!

Dor. I suppose, my lord, this gentleman is privy to our affairs?

Arch. Yes, yes, madam, I'm to be your father.

Dor. Come, priest, do your office.

Arch. Make haste, make haste, couple 'em any way.—[*Takes* Aimwell's *hand.*] Come, madam, I'm to give you——

Dor. My mind's altered; I won't.

Arch. Eh!

Aim. I'm confounded!

Foi. Upon my shoul, and sho is myshelf.

Arch. What's the matter now, madam?

Dor. Look ye, sir, one generous action deserves another.—This gentleman's honor obliged him to hide nothing from me; my justice engages me to conceal nothing from him. In short, sir, you are the person that you thought you counterfeited; you are the true Lord Viscount Aimwell, and I wish your lordship joy.—Now, priest, you may be gone; if my lord is pleased now with the match, let his lordship marry me in the face of the world.

Aim., Arch. What does she mean?

Dor. Here's a witness for my truth.

Enter Sir Charles Freeman *and* Mrs. Sullen.

Sir Chas. My dear Lord Aimwell, I wish you joy.

Aim. Of what?

Sir Chas. Of your honor and estate. Your brother died the day before I left London; and all your friends have writ after you to Brussels;—among the rest I did myself the honor.

Arch. Hark 'ye, sir knight, don't you banter now?

Sir Chas. 'Tis truth, upon my honor.

Aim. Thanks to the pregnant stars that formed this accident!

Arch. Thanks to the womb of time that brought it forth!—away with it!

Aim. Thanks to my guardian angel that led me to the prize! [*Taking* Dorinda's *hand.*

Arch. And double thanks to the noble Sir Charles Freeman.—My lord, I wish you joy.—My lady, I wish you joy.—Egad, Sir Freeman, you're the honestest fellow living!—'Sdeath, I'm grown strange airy upon this matter!—My lord, how d'ye?—A word, my lord; don't you remember something of a previous agreement, that entitles me to the moiety of this lady's fortune, which I think will amount to five thousand pounds?

Aim. Not a penny, Archer; you would ha' cut my throat just now, because I would not deceive this lady.

Arch. Ay, and I'll cut your throat again, if you should deceive her now.

Aim. That's what I expected; and to end the dispute, the lady's fortune is ten thousand pounds, we'll divide stakes: take the ten thousand pounds or the lady.

Dor. How! is your lordship so indifferent?

Arch. No, no, no, madam! his lordship knows very well that I'll take the money; I leave you to his lordship, and so we're both provided for.

Enter Count Bellair.

Count Bel. Mesdames et Messieurs, I am your servant trice humble! I hear you be rob here.

Aim. The ladies have been in some danger, sir.

Count Bel. And, begar, our inn be rob too!

Aim. Our inn! by whom?

Count Bel. By the landlord, begar!—Garzoon, he has rob himself, and run away!

Arch. Robbed himself!

Count Bel. Ay, begar, and me too of a hundre pound.

Arch. A hundred pounds?

Count Bel. Yes, that I owed him.

Aim. Our money's gone, Frank.

Arch. Rot the money! my wench is gone.—[*To* Count Bellair.] *Savez-vous quelque-chose de Mademoiselle Cherry?*

Enter a Fellow with a strong-box and a letter.

Fell. Is there one Martin here?

Arch. Ay, ay—who wants him?

Fell. I have a box here, and letter for him.

Arch. [*Taking the box.*] Ha! ha! ha! what's here? Legerdemain!—By this light, my lord, our money again!—But this unfolds the riddle.—[*Opening the letter, reads.*] Hum, hum, hum!—Oh, 'tis for the public good, and must be communicated to the company.

[*Reads.*

Mr. Martin,

My father being afraid of an impeachment by the rogues that are taken to-night, is gone off; but if you can procure him a pardon, he'll make great discoveries that may be useful to the country. Could I have met you instead of your master to-night, I would have delivered myself into your hands, with a sum that much exceeds that in your strong-box, which I have sent you, with an assurance to my dear Martin that I shall ever be his most faithful friend till death.

Cherry Boniface.

There's a billet-doux for you! As for the father, I think he ought to be encouraged; and for the daughter—pray, my lord, persuade your bride to take her into her service instead of Gipsy.

Aim. I can assure you, madam, your deliverance was owing to her discovery.

Dor. Your command, my lord, will do without the obligation. I'll take care of her.

Sir Chas. This good company meets opportunely in favor of a design I have in behalf of my unfortunate sister. I intend to part her from her husband—gentlemen, will you assist me?

Arch. Assist you! 'sdeath, who would not?

Count Bel. Assist! garzoon, we all assist!

Enter Sullen.

Squire Sul. What's all this? They tell me, spouse, that you had like to have been robbed.

Mrs. Sul. Truly, spouse, I was pretty near it, had not these two gentlemen interposed.

Squire Sul. How came these gentlemen here?

Mrs. Sul. That's his way of returning thanks, you must know.

Count Bel. Garzoon, the question be apropos for all dat.

Sir Chas. You promised last night, sir, that you would deliver your lady to me this morning.

Squire Sul. Humph!

Arch. Humph! what do you mean by humph? Sir, you shall deliver her—in short, sir, we have saved you and your family; and if you are not civil, we'll unbind the rogues, join with 'em, and set fire to your house. What does the man mean? not part with his wife!

Count Bel. Ay, garzoon, de man no understan common justice.

Mrs. Sul. Hold, gentlemen! All things here must move by consent, compulsion would spoil us. Let my dear and I talk the matter over, and you shall judge it between us.

Squire Sul. Let me know first who are to be our judges. Pray, sir, who are you?

Sir Chas. I am Sir Charles Freeman, come to take away your wife.

Squire Sul. And you, good sir?

Aim. Charles, Viscount Aimwell, come to take away your sister.

Squire Sul. And you, pray, sir?

Arch. Francis Archer, esquire, come——

Squire Sul. To take away my mother, I hope. Gentlemen, you're heartily welcome; I never met with three more obliging people since I was born!—And now, my dear, if you please, you shall have the first word.

Arch. And the last, for five pound!

Mrs. Sul. Spouse!

Squire Sul. Rib!

Mrs. Sul. How long have we been married?

Squire Sul. By the almanac, fourteen months; but by my account, fourteen years.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis thereabout by my reckoning.

Count Bel. Garzoon, their account will agree.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, spouse, what did you marry for?

Squire Sul. To get an heir to my estate.

Sir Chas. And have you succeeded?

Squire Sul. No.

Arch. The condition fails of his side.—Pray, madam, what did you marry for?

Mrs. Sul. To support the weakness of my sex by the strength of his, and to enjoy the pleasures of an agreeable society.

Sir Chas. Are your expectations answered?

Mrs. Sul. No.

Count Bel. A clear case! a clear case!

Sir Chas. What are the bars to your mutual contentment?

Mrs. Sul. In the first place, I can't drink ale with him.

Squire Sul. Nor can I drink tea with her.

Mrs. Sul. I can't hunt with you.

Squire Sul. Nor can I dance with you.

Mrs. Sul. I hate cocking and racing.

Squire Sul. And I abhor ombre and piquet.

Mrs. Sul. Your silence is intolerable.

Squire Sul. Your prating is worse.

Mrs. Sul. Have we not been a perpetual offence to each other? a gnawing vulture at the heart?

Squire Sul. A frightful goblin to the sight?

Mrs. Sul. A porcupine to the feeling?

Squire Sul. Perpetual wormwood to the taste?

Mrs. Sul. Is there on earth a thing we could agree in?

Squire Sul. Yes—to part.

Mrs. Sul. With all my heart.

Squire Sul. Your hand.

Mrs. Sul. Here.

Squire Sul. These hands joined us, these shall part us.—Away!

Mrs. Sul. North.

Squire Sul. South.

Mrs. Sul. East.

Squire Sul. West—far as the poles asunder.

Count Bel. Begar, the ceremony be vera pretty!

Sir Chas. Now, Mr. Sullen, there wants only my sister's fortune to make us easy.

Squire Sul. Sir Charles, you love your sister, and I love her fortune; every one to his fancy.

Arch. Then you won't refund?

Squire Sul. Not a stiver.

Arch. Then I find, madam, you must e'en go to your prison again.

Count Bel. What is the portion?

Sir Chas. Ten thousand pounds, sir.

Count Bel. Garzoon, I'll pay it, and she shall go home wid me.

Arch. Ha! ha! ha! French all over.—Do you know, sir, what ten thousand pounds English is?

Count Bel. No, begar, not justement.

Arch. Why, sir, 'tis a hundred thousand livres.

Count Bel. A hundre tousand livres! Ah! garzoon, me canno' do't, your beauties and their fortunes are both too much for me.

Arch. Then I will.—This night's adventure has proved strangely lucky to us all—for Captain Gibbet in his walk had made bold, Mr. Sullen, with your study and escritoir, and had taken out all the writings of your estate, all the articles of marriage with this lady, bills, bonds, leases, receipts to an infinite value: I took 'em from him, and I deliver 'em to Sir Charles.

[*Gives* Sir Charles Freeman *a parcel of papers and parchments.*

Squire Sul. How, my writings!—my head aches consumedly.—Well, gentlemen, you shall have her fortune, but I can't talk. If you have a mind, Sir Charles, to be merry, and celebrate my sister's wedding and my divorce, you may command my house—but my head aches consumedly.—Scrub, bring me a dram.

Arch. [*To* Mrs. Sullen.] Madam, there's a country dance to the trifle that I sung today; your hand, and we'll lead it up.

Here a Dance.

'Twould be hard to guess which of these parties is the better pleased, the couple joined, or the couple parted; the one rejoicing in hopes of an untasted happiness, and the other in their deliverance from an experienced misery.

Both happy in their several states we find,
Those parted by consent, and those conjoined.
Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee,
Consent is law enough to set you free.

EPILOGUE

Designed to be spoken in "The Beaux' Stratagem."

If to our play your judgment can't be kind,
Let its expiring author pity find:
Survey his mournful case with melting eyes,
Nor let the bard be damned before he dies.
Forbear, you fair, on his last scene to frown,
But his true exit with a plaudit crown;
Then shall the dying poet cease to fear
The dreadful knell, while your applause he hear.
At Leuctra so the conquering Theban died,
Claimed his friends' praises, but their tears denied:
Pleased in the pangs of death he greatly thought
Conquest with loss of life but cheaply bought.
The difference this, the Greek was one would fight,
As brave, though not so gay, as Serjeant Kite;
Ye sons of Will's, what's that to those who write?
To Thebes alone the Grecian owed his bays,
You may the bard above the hero raise,
Since yours is greater than Athenian praise.

JOSEPH ADDISON

CATO

At first sight it seems no very fruitful study to contemplate a versatile man of letters only in what is admittedly one of the less potent phases of his manifold activity. When Dr. Johnson advises him who wishes to attain an English style, "to give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison," he is thinking of his prose, not of his dramatic verse, of *The Spectator,* not of *Cato.* And yet the single tragedy of the great essayist has a far larger significance than similar solitary compositions of Thomson, Smollett, and Johnson himself. This significance lies not so much in any intrinsic merit of Addison's classical drama as in its immediate effect. The enthusiastic reception of *Cato* by the audiences of Queen Anne's time is unquestionably the most convincing revelation granted us of the standard of dramatic appreciation in that era. Hence the necessary inclusion of the play in any collection of eighteenth-century dramas.

The tragedy of *Cato* is connected with widely different periods of Addison's comparatively short life (1672-1719). His school days at the Charterhouse and his long sojourn in the cloisters and walks of Magdalen College (Oxford) were behind him, but he was not far past the time of youth, when during his wander-years on the Continent (1699-1702) he composed four acts of a play on the death of the famous old Roman. When Captain Richard Steele read these with loud approval to the genial Colley Cibber across the table of a London tavern in 1703, his cherished friend, "Joe," was not yet "the great Mr. Addison." The Latin poems of college-days, his versified *Letter from Italy* and the prose record of his *Travels* comprised the literary output of this scholar, now turned of thirty. In these Addison's days of the lean kine, Steele's prediction of the incomplete tragedy seemed well founded: "Whatever spirit Mr. Addison had shown in his writing it, he doubted he would never have courage enough to let his *Cato* stand the censure of an English audience; that it had only been the amusement of his leisure hours in Italy and was never intended for the stage." For ten years —as long a period as Walter Scott just a century later kept by him the unfinished manuscript of *Waverley*—he shrank from completing and publishing his drama. During these ten years he had risen to the primacy in the English world of letters. The wide notoriety of *The Campaign,* with which

he greeted Marlborough's victory of Blenheim in 1704, and the high distinction of official rewards, characteristic of this age of patronage, had been succeeded by the large popularity of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* papers (1709-1712). Yet these successes seemed to lessen little his shrinking from the stage that had been increased to a childish timidity by the failure of his opera of *Rosamond* in 1706. External influences availed, however, against his reserve. Political friends, who professed to believe that endangered liberty might be preserved by a single stage-play, importuned Addison, so Dr. Johnson tells us, "in the names of the tutelary deities of Britain to show his courage and zeal by finishing his design." With such promptings loud in his ears, Addison reluctantly concluded his ungrateful task. One voice at least was heard, that of Pope, urging him to be content with printing and not to court popular disfavor on the stage. This advice, according so fully with his own fears, Addison was led to disregard by the wishes of his Whig associates; and—to adapt his own line—"deliberating was lost."

Preparations for the presentation of *Cato* in April, 1713, now went on with spirit. The great Betterton, Steele's ideal for the rôle of Cato in 1703, had now been dead three years, but the lively Cibber was willing to take the part of Syphax, and Wilks, Farquhar's friend, assumed that of Juba. For the title-rôle was selected an admirable young actor, Barton Booth; and for the part of Marcus, a boy of eighteen, Lacy Ryan. Nance Oldfield as Marcia and Mrs. Porter as Lucia were the women of this strong cast. Much care was taken in rehearsal. As the author had waived all share of profits, the actor-managers spared no cost in decorations and costumes. Cato wore a full-bottomed wig of fifty guineas' value, Marcia was resplendent in hoop and brocade, and the gold lace of Juba's waistcoat won high praise. The ubiquitous Steele was engaged to pack the house in Drury Lane; and he seems to have done his work well, for Whigs and Tories, on the scent of political allusions, were present in large numbers. Men of Addison's own party hoped, as Macaulay says, "that the public would discover some analogy between the followers of Cæsar and the Tories, between Sempronius and the apostate Whigs, between Cato struggling to the last for the liberties of Rome and the band of patriots who still stood firm round Halifax and Wharton." Warm Whig clacqueurs from "the city," delighted by the rant of Sempronius, applauded loudly in the wrong places. But all these precautions were unnecessary. From the first lines of Pope's worthy prologue to the last word of Garth's frivolous epilogue, all was eager attention. To quote from Pope's vivid account of the performance: "Cato was not so much the wonder of Rome in his days, as he is of Britain in ours. . . . 'Factions strive who shall applaud him most.' The numerous and violent claps of the Whig party on the one side of the theatre were echoed back by the Tories on the other, while the author sweated behind the scenes with concern to find their applause proceeding more from the hand than the head." The Whig triumph was counteracted by the wily Tory leader, Lord

Bolingbroke, who called Booth into his box between the acts and rewarded him with a purse of fifty guineas. The play was presented to crowded houses in London for thirty-five consecutive nights, and, in the summer, was carried to Oxford, where it delighted the throng of gownsmen. We are told that the London and Oxford profits together brought to each of the three actor-managers fifteen hundred pounds.

It is the deliberate opinion of Macaulay, that "*Cato* did as much as the *Tatlers, Spectators,* and *Freeholders* united to raise Addison's fame among his countrymen." In that day of pamphleteering, approval or censure always found expression in tractules; and in several such monographs, Addison was "dieted with praise, like a pet lamb in a sentimental farce." Yet a hoarse voice was raised in angry dissent—that of surly John Dennis, the "Appius" of Pope's *Essay on Criticism.* His envious soul was offended by the chorus of applause, so unlike the silence that greeted his own dreary tragedies of Whiggish tendencies, and his critical judgment was outraged by obvious blemishes in the highly lauded play. Classical critic that he is, he doffs his hat at the outset of his shilling philippic to the rules of Aristotle, and aims to show that the "faults and absurdities" of *Cato* arise either from not observing these rules or from observing them without discretion. The moral is not derived from the action, which carries a pernicious instruction, self-murder; the amorous actions are improbable on a day of great consequences; the rivalship between the two brothers has no manner of influence upon the action of the play and therefore corrupts its unity, nor has it any consequence in itself, since one brother is killed not as the effect of rivalship, but by common fortune of war; the villainy is comical and unnecessary; and the character of Cato is "inconvenient," not only because the subject is unfit for tragedy, but because his behavior in the play is inconsistent. But these are not the indictments pressed with the greatest force by this carping critic. In his opinion the chief weakness of *Cato* lies, first in its neglect of the doctrine of poetic justice—a neglect entirely consistent with the attack in *The Spectator,* No. 40, upon "the ridiculous doctrine in modern criticism that writers of tragedy are obliged to an equal distribution of rewards and punishments"—and secondly in a too close adherence to the principle of "unity of place," which leads the dramatist into a dozen palpable absurdities. Every sort of action in the play—conspiracy, love-making, the clashing of tongues and of swords, Cato's solitary meditation—befalls preposterously in "the large hall in the governor's palace at Utica." Dennis's temper was doubtless coarse, but his criticisms were acute; and it was well for Addison's serene dignity that he did not attempt a reply, which must have been futile, but, as Pope declared in the ill-advised and scurrilous pamphlet, *The Frenzy of John Dennis,* "was best avenged, as the sun was in the fable upon the bats and owls, by shining on."

The adulation of partial friends and admirers need not long detain us. Over against Steele's too lavish tribute, "That perfect piece called *Cato,*

which has done so great honor to our nation and language, excels as much in the passions of its lovers as in the sublime sentiments of its hero," must be set the unbiased opinion of Dr. Johnson, which leaves so little to be said in the way of summary:

"About things on which the public thinks long, it commonly attains to think right; and of *Cato* it has not been unjustly determined that it is rather a poem in dialogue than a drama, rather a succession of just sentiments in elegant language than a representation of natural affections, or of any state probable or possible in human life. Nothing here 'excites or assuages emotion'; here is 'no magical power of raising fantastic terror or wild anxiety.' The events are expected without solicitude, and are remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the agents we have no care; we consider not what they are doing or what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say. Cato is a being above our solicitude; a man of whom the gods take care, and whom we leave to their care with heedless confidence. To the rest neither gods nor men can have much attention, for there is not one among them that strongly attracts either affection or esteem. But they are made the vehicles of such sentiments and such expressions that there is scarcely a scene in the play which the reader does not wish to impress upon his memory."

In *Cato,* Addison's chief aim was to bring English tragedy into accord with classical precedent, as interpreted by the French school of Racine and Boileau. Hence there was to be strict adherence to rules supposedly "founded on reason and nature and established above these 2,000 years":—the unities of action, time, and place, the decorum of characters, the propriety of manners, the morality of sentiments. Addison's sympathy with these "known and allowed rules" of the classicists had already been displayed in his Epilogue to Ambrose Philips' version of the *Andromaque* of Racine, *The Distrest Mother* (1711), and in constant puffs of that model of correctness in *The Spectator* (Nos. 223, 229, 290, 335). Indeed the stage-success of Philips' borrowed tragedy had been a large factor among the influences that finally overcame Addison's reluctance to give *Cato* to the world. However Dennis might scoff, prevailing contemporary opinion was voiced by the dramatist's staunch defender, George Sewell, in the flattering declaration that "*Cato* conformed to the spirit of poetry and to the best rules of criticism." This verdict was approved by Voltaire a generation later:—"The first English writer who composed a regular tragedy and infused a spirit of elegance through every part of it was the illustrious Mr. Addison. His *Cato* is a masterpiece both with regard to the diction and the harmony and beauty of the numbers."

This attitude of adulation could endure only so long as classical precedents and rules of reason were all-powerful. "While the present humor of idolizing Shakspere continues," so wrote even Addison's right reverend editor, Dr. Hurd, over a hundred years ago, "no quarter will be given to

this poem." We have left eighteenth-century landmarks so far behind us that the model tragedy of that age nowhere conforms to our conception of the tragic. During the greater part of the play, the hero moves apart from the action, rather a name, a reputation, than a man. He is not only remote from our sympathies, but above them, since perfection is no fit theme for tragedy, however it may shine in Plutarch's *Life of Cato the Younger*, the chief source of the drama. If the constant references by others to Cato's prestige and his own pompous self-righteousness excite any feeling in us, it is that of protest, for like the Athenian voter we weary of hearing the popular idol called "the just." Moreover, Cato's only important act, his self-destruction—though in accord with the Plutarchan account—is not only futile, but is adorned by Addison with sentiments entirely out of character. That others should regret the unwisdom of the suicide is natural; that Cato's last words should suggest his own large doubt of its necessity is utterly inconsistent with his Stoic principles. Even the admiring Hurd admits with episcopal pomp that "the amiable author, ever attentive to the interests of religion and virtue, chose, for the sake of these, to violate decorum." Then, too, Cato's benevolent joining of hands and hearts in the final speech is far more in accord with the "God bless you, my children!" tone of comedy than with the tragic spirit.

The love-intrigues that so pleased the audience of 1713 have little interest for the reader of 1913. The characters, who, save Cato, are all of Addison's making, are "splendidly nul." Marcus and Portius, you cannot tell one from t'other. So with Marcia and Lucia. And the princely Juba is no Numidian, but a conventional young Roman of spotless honor. Sempronius the villain is somewhat better than the rest, but he blunders so senselessly and rants so blatantly that his taking-off is hailed as a relief. So undramatic is the structure of the lovers' story, which owes nothing to classical source, that the author makes no attempt to solve the problem of the fraternal rivals for Lucia's hand, but ruthlessly cuts the knot by the death of the unloved brother. Addison has little mastery over incident.

Johnson's praise of the "sentiments and expressions" of the play has been echoed with some reserve by later critics. Macaulay declares that "it contains excellent dialogue and declamation"; Ward deems its language transparently pure; and Leslie Stephen finds much to admire in its pointed sentences and descriptive passages. But even at its best, the diction lacks the essential traits of organic dramatic verse. Though clear, it is so stately and formal as to devitalize the speakers quite. This sententious moralizing and this rationalized rant are the fitting utterance of rhetoricians, not of men and women swayed by passion. But the chief fault of the verse is its lack of poetic quality. The editor knows no vaunted poem that contains more illustrations of what poetry is not than the "faultily faultless" *Cato*.

Cato, in its day, had high honor. "The town is so fond of it," writes Pope, "that the orange wenches and fruit women in the parks offer the

books at the side of the coaches and the prologue and epilogue are cried about the streets by common hawkers." The play was translated into Italian, French, and Latin, and imitated in French and German. Moreover, it held the boards for a century (until its final revival in 1811) with Quin, Sheridan, and Kemble in the title rôle. John Kemble was the last Cato—"the last of the Romans." Time has completely reversed the eighteenth-century verdict. What has become of *Cato* as a stage-play or as a popular poem? Ichabod! Ichabod!

CATO

A Tragedy

PROLOGUE

By Mr. Pope

To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
To raise the genius and to mend the heart,
To make mankind in conscious virtue bold,
Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold;—
For this the tragic muse first trod the stage,
Commanding tears to stream through every age;
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept,
And foes to virtue wondered how they wept.
Our author shuns by vulgar springs to move
The hero's glory, or the virgin's love,
In pitying love, we but our weakness show,
And wild ambition well deserves its woe.
Here tears shall flow from a more generous cause,
Such tears as patriots shed for dying laws.
He bids your breasts with ancient ardor rise,
And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes.
Virtue confessed in human shape he draws,
What Plato thought, and godlike Cato was:
No common object to your sight displays,
But, what with pleasure heaven itself surveys,
A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
And greatly falling with a falling state!
While Cato gives his little senate laws,
What bosom beats not in his country's cause?
Who sees him act, but envies every deed?
Who hears him groan, and does not wish to bleed?
Ev'n then proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,

The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
Showed Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state.
As her dead father's reverend image past,
The pomp was darkened, and the day o'ercast,
The triumph ceased—tears gushed from every eye,
The world's great victor passed unheeded by;
Her last good man dejected Rome adored.
And honored Cæsar's less than Cato's sword.
Britons, attend: be worth like this approved,
And show you have the virtue to be moved.
With honest scorn the first famed Cato viewed
Rome learning arts from Greece, whom she subdued.
Our scene precariously subsists too long
On French translation, and Italian song:
Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage,
Be justly warmed with your own native rage.
Such plays alone should please a British ear,
As Cato's self had not disdained to hear.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

Cato.
Lucius, *a Senator.*
Sempronius, *a Senator.*
Juba, *Prince of Numidia.*
Syphax, *General of the Numidians.*
Portius, Marcus, *Sons of* Cato.
Decius, *Ambassador from Cæsar.*

Mutineers, Guards, etc.

WOMEN

Marcia, *Daughter to* Cato.
Lucia, *Daughter to* Lucius.

Scene.—A Large Hall in the Governor's Palace of Utica.

ACT I

Scene I

Portius, Marcus.

Por. **The dawn is overcast, the morning lowers,**
And heavily in clouds brings on the day,
The great, the important day, big with the fate
Of Cato and of Rome. Our father's death
Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,
And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar
Has ravaged more than half the globe, and sees
Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword:
Should he go further, numbers would be wanting
To form new battles, and support his crimes.
Ye gods, what havoc does ambition make
Among your works!
Mar. **Thy steady temper, Portius,**
Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud, and Cæsar,
In the calm lights of mild philosophy;
I'm tortured ev'n to madness, when I think
On the proud victor: every time he's named
Pharsalia rises to my view!—I see
The insulting tyrant, prancing o'er the field
Strowed with Rome's citizens, and drenched in slaughter,
His horse's hoofs wet with Patrician blood.
Oh, Portius! is there not some chosen curse,

Some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man
Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin?
Por. Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious greatness,
And mixed with too much horror to be envied.
How does the luster of our father's actions,
Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him,
Break out, and burn with more triumphant brightness!
His sufferings shine, and spread a glory around him;
Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause
Of honor, virtue, liberty, and Rome.
His sword ne'er fell but on the guilty head;
Oppression, tyranny, and power usurped,
Draw all the vengeance of his arm upon 'em.
Mar. Who knows not this? But what can Cato do
Against a world, a base, degenerate world,
That courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar?
Pent up in Utica he vainly forms
A poor epitome of Roman greatness,
And, covered with Numidian guards, directs
A feeble army, and an empty senate,
Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.
By heavens, such virtues, joined with such success,
Distract my very soul: our father's fortune
Would almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.
Por. Remember what our father oft has told us:
The ways of heaven are dark and intricate,
Puzzled in mazes, and perplexed with errors;
Our understanding traces 'em in vain,
Lost and bewildered in the fruitless search;
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.
Mar. These are suggestions of a mind at ease:
Oh, Portius! didst thou taste but half the griefs
That wring my soul, thou couldst not talk thus coldly.
Passion unpitied, and successless love,
Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate
My other griefs. Were but my Lucia kind!—
Por. Thou seest not that thy brother is thy rival;
But I must hide it, for I know thy temper. [*Aside.*
Now, Marcus, now, thy virtue's on the proof:
Put forth thy utmost strength, work every nerve,
And call up all thy father in thy soul:
To quell the tyrant Love, and guard thy heart
On this weak side, where most our nature fails,
Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.
Mar. Portius, the counsel which I cannot take,
Instead of healing, but upbraids my weakness.
Bid me for honor plunge into a war
Of thickest foes, and rush on certain death,
Then shalt thou see that Marcus is not slow
To follow glory, and confess his father.
Love is not to be reasoned down, or lost
In high ambition, and a thirst of greatness;
'Tis second life, it grows into the soul,
Warms every vein, and beats in every pulse,
I feel it here: my resolution melts—
Por. Behold young Juba, the Numidian prince!
With how much care he forms himself to glory,
And breaks the fierceness of his native temper
To copy out our father's bright example.
He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her,
His eyes, his looks, his actions all betray it:
But still the smothered fondness burns within him.
When most it swells, and labors for a vent,
The sense of honor and desire of fame
Drive the big passion back into his heart.
What! shall an African, shall Juba's heir,
Reproach great Cato's son, and show the world
A virtue wanting in a Roman soul?
Mar. Portius, no more! your words leave stings behind 'em.
Whene'er did Juba, or did Portius, show
A virtue that has cast me at a distance,
And thrown me out in the pursuits of honor?
Por. Marcus, I know thy generous temper well;
Fling but the appearance of dishonor on it,
It straight takes fire, and mounts into a blaze.
Mar. A brother's sufferings claim a brother's pity.
Por. Heaven knows I pity thee: behold my eyes
Ev'n whilst I speak.—Do they not swim in tears?
Were but my heart as naked to thy view,
Marcus would see it bleed in his behalf.
Mar. Why then dost treat me with rebukes, instead
Of kind, condoling cares and friendly sorrow?
Por. O Marcus! did I know the way to ease
Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,
Marcus, believe me, I could die to do it.

Mar. Thou best of brothers, and thou best of friends!
Pardon a weak, distempered soul, that swells
With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms,
The sport of passions—but Sempronius comes:
He must not find this softness hanging on me. [*Exit.*

Scene II

Sempronius, Portius.

Sem. Conspiracies no sooner should be formed
Than executed. What means Portius here?
I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,
And speak a language foreign to my heart. [*Aside.*
Good-morrow, Portius! let us once embrace,
Once more embrace; whilst yet we both are free.
To-morrow should we thus express our friendship,
Each might receive a slave into his arms:
This sun, perhaps, this morning sun's the last,
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.
Por. My father has this morning called together
To this poor hall his little Roman senate,
(The leavings of Pharsalia) to consult
If yet he can oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome, and all her gods, before it,
Or must at length give up the world to Cæsar.
Sem. Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence.
His virtues render our assembly awful,
They strike with something like religious fear,
And make ev'n Cæsar tremble at the head
Of armies flushed with conquest: O my Portius,
Could I but call that wondrous man my father,
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friend's vows, I might be blessed indeed!
Por. Alas! Sempronius, wouldst thou talk of love
To Marcia, whilst her father's life's in danger?
Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling vestal,
When she beholds the holy flame expiring.
Sem. The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charmed. Thou must take heed, my Portius!
The world has all its eyes on Cato's son.
Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
And shows thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy virtues or thy faults conspicuous.
Por. Well dost thou seem to check my lingering here
On this important hour!—I'll straight away,
And while the fathers of the senate meet
In close debate to weigh the events of war,
I'll animate the soldiers' drooping courage,
With love of freedom, and contempt of life.
I'll thunder in their ears their country's cause,
And try to rouse up all that's Roman in 'em.
'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it. [*Exit.*
Sem., solus. Curse on the stripling! how he apes his sire!
Ambitiously sententious!—but I wonder
Old Syphax comes not; his Numidian genius
Is well disposed to mischief, were he prompt
And eager on it; but he must be spurred,
And every moment quickened to the course.
Cato has used me ill: he has refused
His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows.
Besides, his baffled arms and ruined cause
Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favor,
That showers down greatness on his friends, will raise me
To Rome's first honors. If I give up Cato,
I claim in my reward his captive daughter.
But Syphax comes!—

Scene III

Syphax, Sempronius.

Syph. Sempronius, all is ready;
I've sounded my Numidians, man by man,
And find 'em ripe for a revolt: they all
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
And wait but the command to change their master.
Sem. Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste;
Ev'n whilst we speak, our conqueror comes on,
And gathers ground upon us every moment.
Alas! thou know'st not Cæsar's active soul,
With what a dreadful course he rushes on
From war to war: in vain has nature formed
Mountains and oceans to oppose his passage;
He bounds o'er all, victorious in his march,
The Alps and Pyreneans sink before him;
Through winds and waves and storms he works his way,
Impatient for the battle: one day more
Will set the victor thundering at our gates.

But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
And challenge better terms.
Syph. Alas! he's lost,
He's lost, Sempronius; all his thoughts are full
Of Cato's virtues:—but I'll try once more
(For every instant I expect him here)
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles
Of faith, of honor, and I know not what,
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,
And struck the infection into all his soul.
Sem. Be sure to press upon him every motive.
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,
Would give up Afric into Cæsar's hands,
And make him lord of half the burning zone.
Syph. But is it true, Sempronius, that your senate
Is called together? Gods! thou must be cautious!
Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern
Our frauds, unless they're covered thick with art.
Sem. Let me alone, good Syphax, I'll conceal
My thoughts in passion ('tis the surest way);
I'll bellow out for Rome and for my country,
And mouth at Cæsar till I shake the senate.
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,
A worn-out trick: wouldst thou be thought in earnest?
Clothe thy feigned zeal in rage, in fire, in fury!
Syph. In troth, thou'rt able to instruct grey hairs,
And teach the wily African deceit!
Sem. Once more, be sure to try thy skill on Juba.
Meanwhile I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and underhand
Blow up their discontents, till they break out
Unlooked for, and discharge themselves on Cato.
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste:
Oh think what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots and their last fatal periods.
Oh! 'tis a dreadful interval of time,
Filled up with horror all, and big with death!
Destruction hangs on every word we speak,
On every thought, till the concluding stroke
Determines all, and closes our design.
[*Exit.*
Syph., solus. I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason
This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at Cato.
The time is short, Cæsar comes rushing on us—
But hold! young Juba sees me, and approaches.

Scene IV

Juba, Syphax.

Juba. Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone.
I have observed of late thy looks are fallen,
O'ercast with gloomy cares and discontent;
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee, tell me,
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,
And turn thine eye thus coldly on thy prince?
Syph. 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face,
When discontent sits heavy at my heart.
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.
Juba. Why dost thou cast out such ungenerous terms
Against the lords and sovereigns of the world?
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before 'em,
And own the force of their superior virtue?
Is there a nation in the wilds of Afric,
Amidst our barren rocks and burning sands,
That does not tremble at the Roman name?
Syph. Gods! where's the worth that sets this people up
Above your own Numidia's tawny sons!
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow?
Or flies the javelin swifter to its mark,
Launched from the vigor of a Roman arm?
Who like our active African instructs
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand?
Or guides in troops the embattled elephant,
Loaden with war? these, these are arts, my prince,
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.
Juba. These all are virtues of a meaner rank,
Perfections that are placed in bones and nerves.
A Roman soul is bent on higher views:
To civilize the rude, unpolished world,
And lay it under the restraint of laws;
To make man mild and sociable to man;
To cultivate the wild, licentious savage
With wisdom, discipline, and liberal arts—
The embellishments of life; virtues like these
Make human nature shine, reform the soul,
And break our fierce barbarians into men.
Syph. Patience, kind heavens!—excuse an old man's warmth.
What are these wondrous civilizing arts,
This Roman polish, and this smooth behavior,

That render man thus tractable and tame?
Are they not only to disguise our passions,
To set our looks at variance with our thoughts,
To check the starts and sallies of the soul,
And break off all its commerce with the tongue;
In short, to change us into other creatures
Than what our nature and the gods designed us?
Juba. To strike thee dumb, turn up thy eyes to Cato!
There may'st thou see to what a godlike height
The Roman virtues lift up mortal man.
While good, and just, and anxious for his friends,
He's still severely bent against himself;
Renouncing sleep, and rest, and food, and ease,
He strives with thirst and hunger, toil and heat;
And when his fortune sets before him all
The pomps and pleasures that his soul can wish,
His rigid virtue will accept of none.
Syph. Believe me, prince, there's not an African
That traverses our vast Numidian deserts
In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,
But better practises these boasted virtues.
Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chase,
Amidst the running stream he slakes his thirst,
Toils all the day, and at the approach of night
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
Or rests his head upon a rock till morn:
Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game,
And if the following day he chance to find
A new repast, or an untasted spring,
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.
Juba. Thy prejudices, Syphax, won't discern
What virtues grow from ignorance and choice,
Nor how the hero differs from the brute.
But grant that others could with equal glory
Look down on pleasures, and the baits of sense;
Where shall we find the man that bears affliction,
Great and majestic in his griefs, like Cato?
Heavens, with what strength, what steadiness of mind,
He triumphs in the midst of all his sufferings!
How does he rise against a load of woes,
And thank the gods that throw the weight upon him!
Syph. 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness of soul:
I think the Romans call it stoicism.
Had not your royal father thought so highly
Of Roman virtue, and of Cato's cause,
He had not fallen by a slave's hand, inglorious;
Nor would his slaughtered army now have lain
On Afric's sands, disfigured with their wounds,
To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.
Juba. Why dost thou call my sorrows up afresh?
My father's name brings tears into my eyes.
Syph. Oh, that you'd profit by your father's ills!
Juba. What wouldst thou have me do?
Syph. Abandon Cato.
Juba. Syphax, I should be more than twice an orphan
By such a loss.
Syph. Ay, there's the tie that binds you!
You long to call him father. Marcia's charms
Work in your heart unseen, and plead for Cato.
No wonder you are deaf to all I say.
Juba. Syphax, your zeal becomes importunate;
I've hitherto permitted it to rave,
And talk at large; but learn to keep it in,
Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.
Syph. Sir, your great father never used me thus.
Alas! he's dead! but can you e'er forget
The tender sorrows, and the pangs of nature,
The fond embraces, and repeated blessings,
Which you drew from him in your last farewell?
Still must I cherish the dear, sad remembrance,
At once to torture and to please my soul.
The good old king at parting wrung my hand,
(His eyes brimful of tears) then sighing cried,
Prithee, be careful of my son!—his grief
Swelled up so high, he could not utter more.
Juba. Alas, thy story melts away my soul.
That best of fathers! how shall I discharge
The gratitude and duty which I owe him!
Syph. By laying up his counsels in your heart.
Juba. His counsels bade me yield to thy directions:
Then, Syphax, chide me in severest terms,
Vent all thy passion, and I'll stand its shock,
Calm and unruffled as a summer sea,

When not a breath of wind flies o'er its surface.
Syph. Alas, my prince, I'd guide you to your safety.
Juba. I do believe thou wouldst: but tell me how?
Syph. Fly from the fate that follows Cæsar's foes.
Juba. My father scorned to do it.
Syph. And therefore died.
Juba. Better to die ten thousand thousand deaths,
Than wound my honor.
Syph. Rather say, your love.
Juba. Syphax, I've promised to preserve my temper.
Why wilt thou urge me to confess a flame
I long have stifled, and would fain conceal?
Syph. Believe me, prince, 'tis hard to conquer love,
But easy to divert and break its force:
Absence might cure it, or a second mistress
Light up another flame, and put out this.
The glowing dames of Zama's royal court
Have faces flushed with more exalted charms,
The sun, that rolls his chariot o'er their heads,
Works up more fire and color in their cheeks:
Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget
The pale, unripened beauties of the north.
Juba. 'Tis not a set of features, or complexion,
The tincture of a skin, that I admire.
Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,
Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense.
The virtuous Marcia towers above her sex:
True, she is fair, (oh, how divinely fair!),
But still the lovely maid improves her charms
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners. Cato's soul
Shines out in everything she acts or speaks,
While winning mildness and attractive smiles
Dwell in her looks, and with becoming grace
Soften the rigor of her father's virtues.
Syph. How does your tongue grow wanton in her praise!
But on my knees I beg you would consider—
Juba. Hah! Syphax, is't not she?—she moves this way:
And with her Lucia, Lucius's fair daughter.
My heart beats thick—I prithee, Syphax, leave me.
Syph. Ten thousand curses fasten on 'em both!
Now will this woman, with a single glance,
Undo what I've been laboring all this while.
[*Exit.*

Scene V

Juba, Marcia, Lucia.

Juba. Hail, charming maid! How does thy beauty smooth
The face of war, and make even horror smile!
At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows;
I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me,
And for a while forget the approach of Cæsar.
Mar. I should be grieved, young prince, to think my presence
Unbent your thoughts, and slackened 'em to arms,
While, warm with slaughter, our victorious foe
Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.
Juba. O Marcia, let me hope thy kind concerns
And gentle wishes follow me to battle!
The thought will give new vigor to my arm,
Add strength and weight to my descending sword,
And drive it in a tempest on the foe.
Mar. My prayers and wishes always shall attend
The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
And men approved of by the gods and Cato.
Juba. That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,
I'll gaze forever on thy godlike father,
Transplanting, one by one, into my life,
His bright perfections, till I shine like him.
Mar. My father never, at a time like this,
Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste
Such precious moments.
Juba. Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid; I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue;
If e'er I lead them to the field, when all
The war shall stand ranged in its just array,
And dreadful pomp; then will I think on thee!
O lovely maid, then will I think on thee!
And, in the shock of charging hosts, remember
What glorious deeds should grace the man who hopes
For Marcia's love. [*Exit.*

Scene VI

Lucia, Marcia.

Luc. Marcia, you're too severe:
How could you chide the young good-natured prince,

And drive him from you with so stern an air,
A prince that loves and dotes on you to death?
Mar. 'Tis therefore, Lucia, that I chide him from me.
His air, his voice, his looks, and honest soul
Speak all so movingly in his behalf.
I dare not trust myself to hear him talk.
Luc. Why will you fight against so sweet a passion,
And steel your heart to such a world of charms?
Mar. How, Lucia, wouldst thou have me sink away
In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,
When every moment Cato's life's at stake?
Cæsar comes armed with terror and revenge,
And aims his thunder at my father's head.
Should not the sad occasion swallow up
My other cares, and draw them all into it?
Luc. Why have not I this constancy of mind,
Who have so many griefs to try its force?
Sure, nature formed me of her softest mould,
Enfeebled all my soul with tender passions,
And sunk me ev'n below my own weak sex:
Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.
Mar. Lucia, disburden all thy cares on me,
And let me share thy most retired distress;
Tell me who raises up this conflict in thee?
Luc. I need not blush to name them, when I tell thee
They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.
Mar. They both behold thee with their sister's eyes,
And often have revealed their passion to me.
But tell me whose address thou favorest most;
I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.
Luc. Which is it Marcia wishes for?
Mar. For neither—
And yet for both;—the youths have equal share
In Marcia's wishes, and divide their sister:
But tell me, which of them is Lucia's choice.
Luc. Marcia, they both are high in my esteem,
But in my love—why wilt thou make me name him?
Thou know'st it is a blind and foolish passion,
Pleased and disgusted with it knows not what—
Mar. O Lucia, I'm perplexed, oh tell me which
I must hereafter call my happy brother.
Luc. Suppose 'twere Portius, could you blame my choice?
O Portius, thou hast stolen away my soul!
With what graceful tenderness he loves!
And breathes the softest, the sincerest vows!
Complacency, and truth, and manly sweetness
Dwell ever on his tongue, and smooth his thoughts.
Marcus is over-warm, his fond complaints
Have so much earnestness and passion in them,
I hear him with a secret kind of horror,
And tremble at his vehemence of temper.
Mar. Alas, poor youth! how canst thou throw him from thee?
Lucia, thou know'st not half the love he bears thee;
Whene'er he speaks of thee, his heart's in flames.
He sends out all his soul in every word,
And thinks, and talks, and looks like one transported.
Unhappy youth! how will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!
I dread the consequence.
Luc. You seem to plead
Against your brother Portius.
Mar. Heaven forbid!
Had Portius been the unsuccessful lover,
The same compassion would have fallen on him.
Luc. Was ever virgin love distressed like mine!
Portius himself oft falls in tears before me,
As if he mourned his rival's ill success,
Then bids me hide the motions of my heart,
Nor show which way it turns. So much he fears
The sad effects that it would have on Marcus.
Mar. He knows too well how easily he's fired,
And would not plunge his brother in despair,
But waits for happier times, and kinder moments.
Luc. Alas! too late I find myself involved
In endless griefs, and labyrinths of woe,
Born to afflict my Marcia's family,
And sow dissension in the hearts of brothers.
Tormenting thought! it cuts into my soul.
Mar. Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows,
But to the gods permit the event of things.
Our lives, discolored with our present woes,
May still grow white, and smile with happier hours.
So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and as it runs, refines;
Till, by degrees, the floating mirror shines,
Reflects each flower that on the border grows,
And a new heaven in its fair bosom shows.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

The Senate.

Sempronius, Lucius.

Sem. Rome still survives in this assembled senate!
Let us remember we are Cato's friends,
And act like men who claim that glorious title.
Luc. Cato will soon be here, and open to us
The occasion of our meeting. Hark! he comes! [*A sound of trumpets.*
May all the guardian gods of Rome direct him!

Enter Cato.

Cato. Fathers, we once again are met in council.
Cæsar's approach has summoned us together,
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves:
How shall we treat this bold, aspiring man?
Success still follows him and backs his crimes;
Pharsalia gave him Rome; Egypt has since
Received his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Juba's overthrow,
And Scipio's death? Numidia's burning sands
Still smoke with blood. 'Tis time we should decree
What course to take. Our foe advances on us,
And envies us even Libya's sultry deserts.
Fathers, pronounce your thoughts, are they still fixed
To hold it out, and fight it to the last?
Or are your hearts subdued at length, and wrought
By time and ill success to a submission?
Sempronius, speak.
Sem. My voice is still for war.
Gods, can a Roman senate long debate
Which of the two to choose, slavery or death!
No, let us rise at once, gird on our swords,
And, at the head of our remaining troops,
Attack the foe, break through the thick array
Of his thronged legions, and charge home upon him.
Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his heart, and free the world from bondage.
Rise, fathers, rise! 'tis Rome demands your help;
Rise, and revenge her slaughtered citizens,
Or share their fate! the corps of half her senate
Manure the fields of Thessaly, while we
Sit here, deliberating in cold debates,
If we should sacrifice our lives to honor,
Or wear them out in servitude and chains.
Rouse up, for shame! our brothers of Pharsalia
Point at their wounds, and cry aloud—To battle!
Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow,
And Scipio's ghost walks unrevenged amongst us!
Cato. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason:
True fortitude is seen in great exploits,
That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides,
All else is towering frenzy and distraction.
Are not the lives of those who draw the sword
In Rome's defence intrusted to our care?
Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter,
Might not the impartial world with reason say
We lavished at our deaths the blood of thousands,
To grace our fall, and make our ruin glorious?
Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.
Luc. My thoughts, I must confess, are turned on peace.
Already have our quarrels filled the world
With widows and with orphans: Scythia mourns
Our guilty wars, and earth's remotest regions
Lie half unpeopled by the feuds of Rome:
'Tis time to sheathe the sword, and spare mankind.
It is not Cæsar, but the gods, my fathers,
The gods declare against us, and repel
Our vain attempts. To urge the foe to battle,
(Prompted by blind revenge and wild despair)
Were to refuse the awards of Providence,
And not to rest in heaven's determination.
Already have we shown our love to Rome,
Now let us show submission to the gods.
We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves,
But free the commonwealth; when this end fails,
Arms have no further use: our country's cause,
That drew our swords, now wrests 'em from our hands,
And bids us not delight in Roman blood,
Unprofitably shed; what men could do

Is done already: heaven and earth will witness,
If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.
Sem. This smooth discourse and mild behavior oft
Conceal a traitor—something whispers me
All is not right—Cato, beware of Lucius.
[*Aside to* Cato.
Cato. Let us appear nor rash nor diffident:
Immoderate valor swells into a fault,
And fear, admitted into public councils,
Betrays like treason. Let us shun 'em both.
Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs
Are grown thus desperate. We have bulwarks round us;
Within our walls are troops inured to toil
In Afric's heats, and seasoned to the sun;
Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,
Ready to rise at its young prince's call.
While there is hope, do not distrust the gods;
But wait at least till Cæsar's near approach
Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late
To sue for chains and own a conqueror.
Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time?
No, let us draw her term of freedom out
In its full length, and spin it to the last,
So shall we gain still one day's liberty;
And let me perish, but in Cato's judgment,
A day, an hour, of virtuous liberty
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

Enter Marcus.

Mar. Fathers, this moment, as I watched the gates,
Lodged on my post, a herald is arrived
From Cæsar's camp, and with him comes old Decius,
The Roman knight; he carries in his looks
Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.
Cato. By your permission, fathers, bid him enter. [*Exit* Marcus.
Decius was once my friend, but other prospects
Have loosed those ties, and bound him fast to Cæsar.
His message may determine our resolves.

Scene II

Decius, Cato, etc.

Dec. Cæsar sends health to Cato.—
Cato. Could he send it
To Cato's slaughtered friends, it would be welcome.
Are not your orders to address the senate?
Dec. My business is with Cato: Cæsar sees
The straits to which you're driven; and, as he knows
Cato's high worth, is anxious for your life.
Cato. My life is grafted on the fate of Rome:
Would he save Cato, bid him spare his country.
Tell your dictator this: and tell him, Cato
Disdains a life which he has power to offer.
Dec. Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar;
Her generals and her consuls are no more,
Who checked his conquests, and denied his triumphs.
Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend?
Cato. Those very reasons thou hast urged forbid it.
Dec. Cato, I've orders to expostulate
And reason with you, as from friend to friend:
Think on the storm that gathers o'er your head,
And threatens every hour to burst upon it;
Still may you stand high in your country's honors,
Do but comply, and make your peace with Cæsar.
Rome will rejoice, and cast its eyes on Cato,
As on the second of mankind.
Cato. No more!
I must not think of life on such conditions.
Dec. Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues,
And therefore sets this value on your life:
Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,
And name your terms.
Cato. Bid him disband his legions;
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,
Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate:
Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.
Dec. Cato, the world talks loudly of your wisdom—
Cato. Nay more, though Cato's voice was ne'er employed
To clear the guilty, and to varnish crimes,
Myself will mount the rostrum in his favor,
And strive to gain his pardon from the people.
Dec. A style like this becomes a conqueror.
Cato. Decius, a style like this becomes a Roman.
Dec. What is a Roman, that is Cæsar's foe?
Cato. Greater than Cæsar, he's a friend to virtue.
Dec. Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,
And at the head of your own little senate;
You don't now thunder in the Capitol,
With all the mouths of Rome to second you.
Cato. Let him consider that who drives us hither:
'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little,

And thinned its ranks. Alas! thy dazzled eye
Beholds this man in a false glaring light,
Which conquest and success have thrown upon him;
Didst thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black
With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes
That strike my soul with horror but to name 'em.
I know thou look'st on me, as on a wretch
Beset with ills, and covered with misfortunes;
But, by the gods I swear, millions of worlds
Should never buy me to be like that Cæsar.
Dec. Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,
For all his generous cares, and proffered friendship?
Cato. His cares for me are insolent and vain:
Presumptuous man! the gods take care of Cato.
Would Cæsar show the greatness of his soul,
Bid him employ his care for these my friends,
And make good use of his ill-gotten power,
By sheltering men much better than himself.
Dec. Your high unconquered heart makes you forget
You are a man. You rush on your destruction—
But I have done. When I relate hereafter
The tale of this unhappy embassy,
All Rome will be in tears. [*Exit* Decius.

Scene III

Sempronius, Lucius, Cato, etc.

Sem. Cato, we thank thee.
The mighty genius of immortal Rome
Speaks in thy voice, thy soul breathes liberty:
Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utterest,
And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.
Luc. The senate owns its gratitude to Cato,
Who with so great a soul consults its safety,
And guards our lives, while he neglects his own.
Sem. Sempronius gives no thanks on this account.
Lucius seems fond of life; but what is life?
'Tis not to stalk about, and draw fresh air
From time to time, or gaze upon the sun;
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,
Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish.
Oh, could my dying hand but lodge a sword
In Cæsar's bosom, and revenge my country,
By heavens, I could enjoy the pangs of death,
And smile in agony.
Luc. Others perhaps
May serve their country with as warm a zeal,
Though 'tis not kindled into so much rage.
Sem. This sober conduct is a mighty virtue
In lukewarm patriots.
Cato. Come! no more, Sempronius,
All here are friends to Rome, and to each other.
Let us not weaken still the weaker side
By our divisions.
Sem. Cato, my resentments
Are sacrificed to Rome—I stand reproved.
Cato. Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.
Luc. Cato, we all go into your opinion,
Cæsar's behavior has convinced the senate
We ought to hold it out till terms arrive.
Sem. We ought to hold it out till death; but, Cato,
My private voice is drowned amid the senate's.
Cato. Then let us rise, my friends, and strive to fill
This little interval, this pause of life,
(While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful)
With resolution, friendship, Roman bravery,
And all the virtues we can crowd into it;
That heaven may say, it ought to be prolonged.
Fathers, farewell—The young Numidian prince
Comes forward, and expects to know our counsels.

Scene IV

Cato, Juba.

Cato. Juba, the Roman Senate has resolved,
Till time give better prospects, still to keep
The sword unsheathed, and turn its edge on Cæsar.
Juba. The resolution fits a Roman senate.
But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.
My father, when some days before his death
He ordered me to march for Utica,
(Alas! I thought not then his death so near)
Wept o'er me, pressed me in his aged arms,
And, as his griefs gave way, "My son," said he,
"Whatever fortune shall befall thy father,
Be Cato's friend; he'll train thee up to great
And virtuous deeds: do but observe him well,
Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear 'em."
Cato. Juba, thy father was a worthy prince,
And merited, alas! a better fate;
But heaven thought otherwise.

Juba. My father's fate,
In spite of all the fortitude that shines
Before my face, in Cato's great example,
Subdues my soul, and fills my eyes with tears.
Cato. It is an honest sorrow, and becomes thee.
Juba. My father drew respect from foreign climes:
The kings of Afric sought him for their friend;
Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports,
Behind the hidden sources of the Nile,
In distant worlds, on t'other side the sun:
Oft have their black embassadors appeared,
Loaden with gifts, and filled the courts of Zama.
Cato. I am no stranger to thy father's greatness.
Juba. I would not boast the greatness of my father,
But point out new alliances to Cato.
Had we not better leave this Utica,
To arm Numidia in our cause, and court
The assistance of my father's powerful friends?
Did they know Cato, our remotest kings
Would pour embattled multitudes about him;
Their swarthy hosts would darken all our plains,
Doubling the native horror of the war,
And making death more grim.
Cato. And canst thou think
Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar?
Reduced, like Hannibal, to seek relief
From court to court, and wander up and down,
A vagabond in Afric!
Juba. Cato, perhaps
I'm too officious, but my forward cares
Would fain preserve a life of so much value.
My heart is wounded, when I see such virtue
Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.
Cato. Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.
But know, young prince, that valor soars above
What the world calls misfortune and affliction.
These are not ills; else would they never fall
On heaven's first favorites, and the best of men:
The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice
Virtues that shun the day, and lie concealed
In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.
Juba. I'm charmed whene'er thou talk'st! I pant for virtue
And all my soul endeavors at perfection.
Cato. Dost thou love watchings, abstinence, and toil,
Laborious virtues all? learn them from Cato:
Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.
Juba. The best good fortune that can fall on Juba,
The whole success at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.
Cato. What does Juba say?
Thy words confound me.
Juba. I would fain retract them,
Give 'em back again. They aimed at nothing.
Cato. Tell me thy wish, young prince; make not my ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.
Juba. Oh! they're extravagant;
Still let me hide them.
Cato. What can Juba ask
That Cato will refuse?
Juba. I fear to name it.
Marcia—inherits all her father's virtues.
Cato. What wouldst thou say?
Juba. Cato, thou hast a daughter.
Cato. Adieu, young prince; I would not hear a word
Should lessen thee in my esteem: remember
The hand of fate is over us, and heaven
Exacts severity from all our thoughts:
It is not now a time to talk of aught
But chains or conquest, liberty or death.

Scene V

Syphax, Juba.

Syph. How's this, my prince, what! covered with confusion?
You look as if yon stern philosopher
Had just now chid you.
Juba. Syphax, I'm undone!
Syph. I know it well.
Juba. Cato thinks meanly of me.
Syph. And so will all mankind.
Juba. I've opened to him
The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.
Syph. Cato's a proper person to intrust
A love-tale with!
Juba. Oh! I could pierce my heart,
My foolish heart! was ever wretch like Juba?
Syph. Alas! my prince, how are you changed of late!
I've known young Juba rise before the sun,
To beat the thicket where the tiger slept,
Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts:
How did the color mount into your cheeks,
When first you roused him to the chase! I've seen you,
Even in the Libyan dog-days, hunt him down,
Then charge him close, provoke him to the rage
Of fangs and claws, and stooping from your horse
Rivet the panting savage to the ground.

Juba. Prithee, no more!
Syph. How would the old king smile
To see you weigh the paws, when tipped with gold,
And throw the shaggy spoils about your shoulders!
Juba. Syphax, this old man's talk (though honey flowed
In every word) would now lose all its sweetness.
Cato's displeased, and Marcia lost forever!
Syph. Young prince, I yet could give you good advice.
Marcia might still be yours.
Juba. What say'st thou, Syphax?
By heavens, thou turn'st me all into attention.
Syph. Marcia might still be yours.
Juba. As how, dear Syphax?
Syph. Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops,
Mounted on steeds, unused to the restraint
Of curbs or bits, and fleeter than the winds:
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up
And bear her off.
Juba. Can such dishonest thoughts
Rise up in man! wouldst thou seduce my youth
To do an act that would destroy my honor?
Syph. Gods! I could tear my beard to hear you talk!
Honor's a fine imaginary notion,
That draws in raw and unexperienced men
To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.
Juba. Wouldst thou degrade thy prince into a ruffian?
Syph. The boasted ancestors of these great men,
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians.
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under heaven, was founded on a rape.
Your Scipios, Cæsars, Pompeys, and your Catos,
(These gods on earth) are all the spurious brood
Of violated maids, of ravished Sabines.
Juba. Syphax, I fear that hoary head of thine
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.
Syph. Indeed, my prince, you want to know the world;
You have not read mankind; your youth admires
The throws and swellings of a Roman soul,
Cato's bold flights, the extravagance of virtue.
Juba. If knowledge of the world makes man perfidious,
May Juba ever live in ignorance!
Syph. Go, go, you're young.
Juba. Gods! must I tamely bear
This arrogance unanswered! thou'rt a traitor,
A false old traitor.
Syph. I have gone too far.
[*Aside.*
Juba. Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.
Syph. I must appease this storm, or perish in it. [*Aside.*
Young prince, behold these locks that are grown white
Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.
Juba. Those locks shall ne'er protect thy insolence.
Syph. Must one rash word, the infirmity of age,
Throw down the merit of my better years?
This the reward of a whole life of service!
Curse on the boy! how steadily he hears me! [*Aside.*
Juba. Is it because the throne of my forefathers
Still stands unfilled, and that Numidia's crown
Hangs doubtful yet, whose head it shall enclose,
Thou thus presumest to treat thy prince with scorn?
Syph. Why will you rive my heart with such expressions?
Does not old Syphax follow you to war?
What are his aims? why does he load with darts
His trembling hand, and crush beneath a casque
His wrinkled brows? what is it he aspires to?
Is it not this, to shed the slow remains,
His last poor ebb of blood, in your defense?
Juba. Syphax, no more! I would not hear you talk.
Syph. Not hear me talk! what, when my faith to Juba,
My royal master's son, is called in question?
My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb:
But whilst I live, I must not hold my tongue,
And languish out old age in his displeasure.
Juba. Thou know'st the way too well into my heart,
I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.
Syph. What greater instance can I give? I've offered
To do an action, which my soul abhors,
And gain you whom you love at any price.
Juba. Was this thy motive? I have been too hasty.
Syph. And 'tis for this my prince has called me traitor.
Juba. Sure thou mistakest; I did not call thee so.

Syph. You did indeed, my prince, you called me traitor:
Nay, further, threatened you'd complain to Cato.
Of what, my prince, would you complain to Cato?
That Syphax loves you, and would sacrifice
His life, nay, more, his honor in your service.
Juba. Syphax, I know thou lov'st me, but indeed
Thy zeal for Juba carried thee too far.
Honor's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,
And imitates her actions, where she is not:
It ought not to be sported with.
Syph. By heavens,
I'm ravished when you talk thus, though you chide me!
Alas! I've hitherto been used to think
A blind, officious zeal to serve my king
The ruling principle that ought to burn
And quench all others in a subject's heart.
Happy the people, who preserve their honor
By the same duties that oblige their prince!
Juba. Syphax, thou now begin'st to speak thyself.
Numidia's grown a scorn among the nations
For breach of public vows. Our Punic faith
Is infamous, and branded to a proverb.
Syphax, we'll join our cares, to purge away
Our country's crimes, and clear her reputation.
Syph. Believe me, prince, you make old Syphax weep
To hear you talk—but 'tis with tears of joy.
If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,
Numidia will be blest by Cato's lectures.
Juba. Syphax, thy hand! we'll mutually forget
The warmth of youth, and frowardness of age:
Thy prince esteems thy worth, and loves thy person.
If e'er the scepter comes into my hand,
Syphax shall stand the second in my kingdom.
Syph. Why will you overwhelm my age with kindness?
My joy grows burdensome, I shan't support it.
Juba. Syphax, farewell, I'll hence, and try to find
Some blest occasion that may set me right
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man
Approve my deeds, than worlds for my admirers. [*Exit.*
Syph. solus. Young men soon give, and soon forget affronts;
Old age is slow in both—A false old traitor!
Those words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.
My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee:
But hence! 'tis gone: I give it to the winds:
Cæsar, I'm wholly thine—

Scene VI

Syphax, Sempronius.

Syph. All hail, Sempronius!
Well, Cato's senate is resolved to wait
The fury of a siege before it yields.
Sem. Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate:
Lucius declared for peace, and terms were offered
To Cato by a messenger from Cæsar.
Should they submit, ere our designs are ripe,
We both must perish in the common wreck,
Lost in a general, undistinguished ruin.
Syph. But how stands Cato?
Sem. Thou hast seen Mount Atlas:
While storms and tempests thunder on its brows,
And oceans break their billows at its feet,
It stands unmoved, and glories in its height.
Such is that haughty man; his towering soul,
'Midst all the shocks and injuries of fortune,
Rises superior, and looks down on Cæsar.
Syph. But what's this messenger?
Sem. I've practised with him,
And found a means to let the victor know
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.
But let me now examine in my turn:
Is Juba fixed?
Syph. Yes—but it is to Cato.
I've tried the force of every reason on him,
Soothed and caressed, been angry, soothed again,
Laid safety, life, and interest in his sight,
But all are vain, he scorns them all for Cato.
Sem. Come, 'tis no matter, we shall do without him.
He'll make a pretty figure in a triumph,
And serve to trip before the victor's chariot.
Syphax, I now may hope thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.
Syph. May she be thine as fast as thou wouldst have her!
Sem. Syphax, I love that woman; though I curse
Her and myself, yet, spite of me, I love her.
Syph. Make Cato sure, and give up Utica,
Cæsar will ne'er refuse thee such a trifle.
But are thy troops prepared for a revolt?
Does the sedition catch from man to man,
And run among their ranks?
Sem. All, all is ready.
The factious leaders are our friends, that spread

Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers.
They count their toilsome marches, long fatigues,
Unusual fastings, and will bear no more
This medley of philosophy and war.
Within an hour they'll storm the senate-house.
Syph. Meanwhile I'll draw up my Numidian troops
Within the square, to exercise their arms,
And, as I see occasion, favor thee.
I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
Will look aghast, while unforeseen destruction
Pours in upon him thus from every side.
So, where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
Sudden, the impetuous hurricanes descend,
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
And smothered in the dusty whirlwind dies.

ACT III

Scene I

Marcus, Portius.

Mar. Thanks to my stars, I have not ranged about
The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend;
Nature first pointed out my Portius to me,
And early taught me, by her secret force,
To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit;
Till, what was instinct, grew up into friendship.
Por. Marcus, the friendships of the world are oft
Confederacies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;
Ours has severest virtue for its basis,
And such a friendship ends not but with life.
Mar. Portius, thou know'st my soul in all its weakness;
Then prithee spare me on its tender side,
Indulge me but in love, my other passions
Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules.
Por. When love's well-timed, 'tis not a fault to love.
The strong the brave, the virtuous, and the wise
Sink in the soft captivity together.
I would not urge thee to dismiss thy passion,
(I know 'twere vain) but to suppress its force,
Till better times may make it look more graceful.
Mar. Alas! thou talk'st like one who never felt
The impatient throbs and longings of a soul
That pants and reaches after distant good.
A lover does not live by vulgar time:
Believe me, Portius, in my Lucia's absence
Life hangs upon me, and becomes a burden;
And yet, when I behold the charming maid,
I'm ten times more undone; while hope, and fear,
And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once,
And with variety of pain distract me.
Por. What can thy Portius do to give thee help?
Mar. Portius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair one's presence:
Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her
With all the strength and heats of eloquence
Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.
Tell her thy brother languishes to death,
And fades away, and withers in his bloom;
That he forgets his sleep, and loathes his food,
That youth, and health, and war, are joyless to him.
Describe his anxious days and restless nights,
And all the torments that thou seest me suffer.
Por. Marcus, I beg thee give me not an office
That suits with me so ill. Thou know'st my temper.
Mar. Wilt thou behold me sinking in my woes?
And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm,
To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows?
Por. Marcus, thou canst not ask what I'd refuse.
But here, believe me, I've a thousand reasons—
Mar. I know thou'lt say my passion's out of season;
That Cato's great example and misfortunes
Should both conspire to drive it from my thoughts.
But what's all this to one who loves like me!
Oh, Portius, Portius, from my soul I wish
Thou didst but know thyself what 'tis to love!
Then wouldst thou pity and assist thy brother.
Por. What should I do? If I disclose my passion,
Our friendship's at an end: if I conceal it,
The world will call me false to a friend and brother. [*Aside.*
Mar. But see where Lucia, at her wonted hour,
Amid the cool of yon high marble arch,
Enjoys the noon-day breeze! observe her, Portius!
That face, that shape, those eyes, that heaven of beauty!

Observe her well, and blame me, if thou canst.
Por. She sees us, and advances—
Mar. I'll withdraw,
And leave you for awhile. Remember, Portius,
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue.

Scene II

Lucia, Portius.

Luc. Did not I see your brother Marcus here?
Why did he fly the place, and shun my presence?
Por. Oh, Lucia, language is too faint to show
His rage of love; it preys upon his life;
He pines, he sickens, he despairs, he dies:
His passions and his virtues lie confused,
And mixed together in so wild a tumult,
That the whole man is quite disfigured in him.
Heavens! would one think 'twere possible for love
To make such ravage in a noble soul!
Oh, Lucia, I'm distrest! my heart bleeds for him;
Ev'n now, while thus I stand blest in thy presence,
A secret damp of grief comes o'er my thoughts,
And I'm unhappy, though thou smil'st upon me.
Luc. How wilt thou guard thy honor, in the shock
Of love and friendship! think betimes, my Portius,
Think how the nuptial tie, that might insure
Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height
Thy brother's griefs, as might perhaps destroy him.
Por. Alas, poor youth! what dost thou think, my Lucia?
His generous, open, undesigning heart
Has begged his rival to solicit for him.
Then do not strike him dead with a denial,
But hold him up in life, and cheer his soul
With the faint glimmering of a doubtful hope:
Perhaps, when we have passed these gloomy hours,
And weathered out the storm that beats upon us—
Luc. No, Portius, no! I see thy sister's tears,
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death,
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves.
And, Portius, here I swear, to heaven I swear,
To heaven, and all the powers that judge mankind,
Never to mix my plighted hands with thine,
While such a cloud of mischiefs hangs about us,
But to forget our loves, and drive thee out
From all my thoughts, as far—as I am able.
Por. What hast thou said! I'm thunderstruck!—recall
Those hasty words, or I am lost for ever.
Luc. Has not the vow already passed my lips?
The gods have heard it, and 'tis sealed in heaven.
May all the vengeance that was ever poured
On perjured heads o'erwhelm me, if I break it!
Por. Fixed in astonishment, I gaze upon thee;
Like one just blasted by a stroke from heaven,
Who pants for breath, and stiffens, yet alive,
In dreadful looks—a monument of wrath!
Luc. At length I've acted my severest part,
I feel the woman breaking in upon me.
And melt about my heart! my tears will flow.
But oh I'll think no more! the hand of fate
Has torn thee from me, and I must forget thee.
Por. Hard-hearted, cruel maid!
Luc. Oh stop those sounds,
Those killing sounds! why dost thou frown upon me?
My blood runs cold, my heart forgets to heave,
And life itself goes out at thy displeasure.
The gods forbid us to indulge our loves,
But oh! I cannot bear thy hate and live!
Por. Talk not of love, thou never knew'st its force,
I've been deluded, led into a dream
Of fancied bliss. Oh Lucia, cruel maid!
Thy dreadful vow, loaden with death, still sounds
In my stunned ears. What shall I say or do?
Quick, let us part! perdition's in thy presence,
And horror dwells about thee!—hah, she faints!
Wretch that I am! what has my rashness done!
Lucia, thou injured innocence! thou best
And loveliest of thy sex! awake, my Lucia,
Or Portius rushes on his sword to join thee.
—Her imprecations reach not to the tomb,
They shut not out society in death—
But, hah! she moves! life wanders up and down
Through all her face, and lights up every charm.
Luc. O Portius, was this well!—to frown on her

That lives upon thy smiles! to call in doubt
The faith of one expiring at thy feet,
That loves thee more than ever woman loved!
—What do I say? my half-recovered sense
Forgets the vow in which my soul is bound.
Destruction stands betwixt us! we must part.
Por. Name not the word, my frighted thoughts run back,
And startle into madness at the sound.
Luc. What wouldst thou have me do? consider well
The train of ills our love would draw behind it.
Think, Portius, think, thou seest thy dying brother
Stabbed at his heart, and all besmeared with blood,
Storming at heaven and thee! thy awful sire
Sternly demands the cause, the accursed cause,
That robs him of his son! poor Marcia trembles,
Then tears her hair, and frantic in her griefs
Calls out on Lucia! What could Lucia answer?
Or how stand up in such a scene of sorrow?
Por. To my confusion and eternal grief,
I must approve the sentence that destroys me.
The mist that hung about my mind clears up;
And now, athwart the terrors that thy vow
Has planted round thee, thou appear'st more fair,
More amiable, and risest in thy charms.
Loveliest of women! heaven is in thy soul,
Beauty and virtue shine for ever round thee,
Brightening each other! thou art all divine!
Luc. Portius, no more! thy words shoot through my heart,
Melt my resolves, and turn me all to love.
Why are those tears of fondness in thy eyes?
Why heaves thy heart? Why swells thy soul with sorrow?
It softens me too much—farewell, my Portius,
Farewell, though death is in the word, forever.
Por. Stay, Lucia, stay! what dost thou say? Forever?
Luc. Have I not sworn? if, Portius, thy success
Must throw thy brother on his fate, farewell—
Oh, how shall I repeat the word?—forever!
Por. Thus o'er the dying lamp the unsteady flame
Hangs quivering on a point, leaps off by fits,
And falls again, as loth to quit its hold.
Thou must not go, my soul still hovers o'er thee,
And can't get loose.
Luc. If the firm Portius shake
To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers!
Por. 'Tis true; unruffled and serene I've met
The common accidents of life, but here
Such an unlooked-for storm of ills falls on me,
It beats down all my strength. I cannot bear it.
We must not part.
Luc. What dost thou say? not part?
Hast thou forgot the vow that I have made?
Are there not heavens, and gods, and thunder o'er us?
—But see! thy brother Marcus bends this way!
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell,
Farewell, and know thou wrong'st me, if thou think'st
Ever was love, or ever grief, like mine.

Scene III

Marcus, Portius.

Mar. Portius, what hopes? how stands she? am I doomed
To life or death?
Por. What wouldst thou have me say?
Mar. What means this pensive posture? thou appear'st
Like one amazed and terrified.
Por. I've reason.
Mar. Thy downcast looks and thy disordered thoughts
Tell me my fate. I ask not the success
My cause has found.
Por. I'm grieved I undertook it.
Mar. What! does the barbarous maid insult my heart,
My aching heart! and triumph in my pains?
That I could cast her from my thoughts for ever!
Por. Away! you're too suspicious in your griefs;
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,
Compassionates your pains, and pities you!
Mar. Compassionates my pains, and pities me!
What is compassion when 'tis void of love?
Fool that I was to choose so cold a friend
To urge my cause! compassionate my pains!
Prithee what art, what rhetoric didst thou use
To gain this mighty boon? She pities me!
To one that asks the warm return of love,
Compassion's cruelty, 'tis scorn, 'tis death—
Por. Marcus, no more! have I deserved this treatment?
Mar. What have I said! O Portius, O forgive me!
A soul exasperated in ills falls out

With everything, its friend, its self—but, hah!
What means that shout, big with the sounds of war?
What new alarm?
Por. A second, louder yet,
Swells in the winds, and comes more full upon us.
Mar. Oh for some glorious cause to fall in battle!
Lucia, thou hast undone me! thy disdain
Has broke my heart: 'tis death must give me ease.
Por. Quick, let us hence; who knows if Cato's life
Stands sure? O Marcus, I am warmed; my heart
Leaps at the trumpet's voice, and burns for glory.

Scene IV

Sempronius *with the leaders of the mutiny.*

Sem. At length the winds are raised, the storm blows high,
Be it your care, my friends, to keep it up
In its full fury, and direct it right,
Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.
Meanwhile I'll herd among his friends, and seem
One of the number, that whate'er arrive,
My friends and fellow soldiers may be safe.
First Lead. We all are safe, Sempronius is our friend,
Sempronius is as brave a man as Cato.
But, hark! he enters. Bear up boldly to him;
Be sure you beat him down, and bind him fast.
This day will end our toils, and give us rest;
Fear nothing, for Sempronius is our friend.

Scene V

Cato, Sempronius, Lucius, Portius, Marcus, etc.

Cato. Where are these bold, intrepid sons of war,
That greatly turn their backs upon the foe,
And to their general send a brave defiance?
Sem. Curse on their dastard souls, they stand astonished! [*Aside.*
Cato. Perfidious men! and will you thus dishonor
Your past exploits, and sully all your wars?
Do you confess 'twas not a zeal for Rome,
Nor love of liberty, nor thirst of honor,
Drew you thus far; but hopes to share the spoil
Of conquered towns and plundered provinces?
Fired with such motives you do well to join
With Cato's foes, and follow Cæsar's banners.
Why did I scape the envenomed aspic's rage,
And all the fiery monsters of the desert,
To see this day? why could not Cato fall
Without your guilt? Behold, ungrateful men,
Behold my bosom naked to your swords,
And let the man that's injured strike the blow.
Which of you all suspects that he is wronged,
Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato?
Am I distinguished from you but by toils,
Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares?
Painful pre-eminence!
Sem. By heavens they droop!
Confusion to the villains! all is lost. [*Aside.*
Cato. Have you forgotten Libya's burning waste,
Its barren rocks, parched earth, and hills of sand,
Its tainted air, and all its broods of poison?
Who was the first to explore the untrodden path,
When life was hazarded in every step?
Or, fainting in the long, laborious march,
When on the banks of an unlooked-for stream
You sunk the river with repeated draughts,
Who was the last in all your host that thirsted?
Sem. If some penurious source by chance appeared,
Scanty of waters, when you scooped it dry,
And offered the full helmet up to Cato,
Did he not dash the untasted moisture from him?
Did he not lead you through the mid-day sun,
And clouds of dust? did not his temples glow
In the same sultry winds and scorching heats?
Cato. Hence, worthless men! hence! and complain to Cæsar
You could not undergo the toils of war,
Nor bear the hardships that your leader bore.
Luc. See, Cato, see the unhappy men! they weep!
Fear, and remorse, and sorrow for their crime,
Appear in every look, and plead for mercy.
Cato. Learn to be honest men, give up your leaders,
And pardon shall descend on all the rest.
Sem. Cato, commit these wretches to my care.
First let 'em each be broken on the rack,
Then, with what life remains, impaled and left
To writhe at leisure round the bloody stake.
There let 'em hang, and taint the southern wind.
The partners of their crime will learn obedience,
When they look up and see their fellow-traitors

Stuck on a fork, and blackening in the sun.
Luc. Sempronius, why, why wilt thou urge the fate
Of wretched men?
Sem. How! wouldst thou clear rebellion?
Lucius (good man) pities the poor offenders,
That would imbrue their hands in Cato's blood.
Cato. Forbear, Sempronius!—see they suffer death,
But in their deaths remember they are men.
Strain not the laws to make their tortures grievous.
Lucius, the base, degenerate age requires
Severity, and justice in its rigor;
This awes an impious, bold, offending world,
Commands obedience, and gives force to laws.
When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish,
The gods behold their punishment with pleasure,
And lay the uplifted thunderbolt aside.
Sem. Cato, I execute thy will with pleasure,
Cato. Meanwhile we'll sacrifice to liberty.
Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The generous plan of power delivered down,
From age to age, by your renowned forefathers,
(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood)
Oh let it never perish in your hands!
But piously transmit it to your children.
Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defense.

Scene VI

Sempronius *and the leaders of the mutiny.*

1st Lead. Sempronius, you have acted like yourself,
One would have thought you had been half in earnest.
Sem. Villain, stand off! base, grovelling, worthless wretches,
Mongrels in faction, poor faint-hearted traitors!
2d Lead. Nay, now you carry it too far, Sempronius:
Throw off the mask, there are none here but friends.
Sem. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves presume
To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They're thrown neglected by: but if it fails,
They're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.
Here, take these factious monsters, drag 'em forth
To sudden death.

Enter Guards.

1st Lead. Nay, since it comes to this—
Sem. Despatch 'em quick, but first pluck out their tongues,
Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition.

Scene VII

Syphax, Sempronius.

Syph. Our first design, my friend, has proved abortive;
Still there remains an after-game to play:
My troops are mounted; their Numidian steeds
Snuff up the wind, and long to scour the desert:
Let but Sempronius head us in our flight,
We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his guard,
And hew down all that would oppose our passage.
A day will bring us into Cæsar's camp.
Sem. Confusion! I have failed of half my purpose:
Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind!
Syph. How! will Sempronius turn a woman's slave?
Sem. Think not thy friend can ever feel the soft
Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.
Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,
And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion:
When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.
Syph. Well said! that's spoken like thyself, Sempronius.
What hinders then, but that thou find her out,
And hurry her away by manly force?
Sem. But how to gain admission? for access
Is given to none but Juba and her brothers.
Syph. Thou shalt have Juba's dress and Juba's guards:
The doors will open, when Numidia's prince
Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.
Sem. Heavens, what a thought is there! Marcia's my own!
How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,
When I behold her struggling in my arms,
With glowing beauty and disordered charms,
While fear and anger, with alternate grace,
Pant in her breast, and vary in her face!
So Pluto, seized of Proserpine, conveyed
To hell's tremendous gloom the affrighted maid,
There grimly smiled, pleased with the beauteous prize,
Nor envied Jove his sunshine and his skies.

ACT IV

Scene I

Lucia, Marcia.

Luc. Now tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy soul.
If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman
To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers?
Mar. O Lucia, Lucia, might my big-swoln heart
Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow:
Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace
With all thy woes, and count out tear for tear.
Luc. I know thou'rt doomed, alike, to be beloved
By Juba and thy father's friend, Sempronius;
But which of these has power to charm like Portius?
Mar. Still must I beg thee not to name Sempronius?
Lucia, I like not that loud, boisterous man;
Juba to all the bravery of a hero
Adds softest love, and more than female sweetness;
Juba might make the proudest of our sex,
Any of woman-kind, but Marcia, happy.
Luc. And why not Marcia? come, you strive in vain
To hide your thoughts from one who knows too well
The inward glowings of a heart in love.
Mar. While Cato lives, his daughter has no right
To love or hate, but as his choice directs.
Luc. But should this father give you to Sempronius?
Mar. I dare not think he will: but if he should—
Why wilt thou add to all the griefs I suffer
Imaginary ills, and fancied tortures?
I hear the sound of feet! they march this way!
Let us retire, and try if we can drown
Each softer thought in sense of present danger.
When love once pleads admission to our hearts,
(In spite of all the virtue we can boast)
The woman that deliberates is lost.

Scene II

Sempronius, *dressed like* Juba, *with Numidian guards.*

Sem. The deer is lodged. I've tracked her to her covert.
Be sure you mind the word, and when I give it,
Rush in at once, and seize upon your prey.
Let not her cries or tears have force to move you.
—How will the young Numidian rave, to see
His mistress lost! if aught could glad my soul,
Beyond the enjoyment of so bright a prize,
'Twould be to torture that young gay barbarian.
—But, hark, what noise! death to my hopes! 'tis he,
'Tis Juba's self! there is but one way left—
He must be murdered, and a passage cut
Through those his guards—Hah! dastards, do you tremble!
Or act like men, or by yon azure heaven—

Enter Juba.

Juba. What do I see? who's this that dare usurp
The guards and habit of Numidia's prince?
Sem. One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,
Presumptuous youth!
Juba. What can this mean? Sempronius!
Sem. My sword shall answer thee. Have at thy heart.
Juba. Nay, then beware thy own, proud, barbarous man!
[Sempronius *falls. His guards surrender.*
Sem. Curse on my stars! am I then doomed to fall
By a boy's hand, disfigured in a vile
Numidian dress, and for a worthless woman?
Gods, I'm distracted! this my close of life!
Oh for a peal of thunder that would make
Earth, sea, and air, and heaven, and Cato tremble! [*Dies.*
Juba. With what a spring his furious soul broke loose.
And left the limbs still quivering on the ground!
Hence let us carry off those slaves to Cato,
That we may there at length unravel all
This dark design, this mystery of fate.

Scene III

Lucia, Marcia.

Luc. Sure 'twas the clash of swords; my troubled heart
Is so cast down, and sunk amidst its sorrows,
It throbs with fear and aches at every sound.
O Marcia, should thy brothers for my sake!—
I die away with horror at the thought.
Mar. See, Lucia, see! here's blood! here's blood and murder!
Hah, a Numidian! heavens preserve the prince;
The face lies muffled up within the garment.
But hah! death to my sight, a diadem,

And purple robes! O Gods! 'tis he, 'tis he!
Juba, the loveliest youth that ever warmed
A virgin's heart, Juba lies dead before us!
Luc. Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance
Thy wonted strength and constancy of mind;
Thou canst not put it to a greater trial.
Mar. Lucia, look there, and wonder at my patience.
Have I not cause to rave, and beat my breast,
To rend my heart with grief, and run distracted?
Luc. What can I think or say to give thee comfort?
Mar. Talk not of comfort, 'tis for lighter ills:
Behold a sight that strikes all comfort dead.

Enter Juba, *listening.*

I will indulge my sorrows, and give way
To all the pangs and fury of despair,
That man, that best of men, deserved it from me.
Juba. What do I hear! and was the false Sempronius
That best of men? Oh had I fallen like him,
And could have thus been mourned, I had been happy!
Luc. Here will I stand, companion in thy woes,
And help thee with my tears! when I behold
A loss like thine, I half forget my own.
Mar. 'Tis not in fate to ease my tortured breast.
This empty world, to me a joyless desert,
Has nothing left to make poor Marcia happy.
Juba. I'm on the rack! was he so near her heart?
Mar. Oh! he was all made up of love and charms,
Whatever maid could wish or man admire:
Delight of every eye! when he appeared,
A secret pleasure gladdened all that saw him;
But when he talked, the proudest Roman blushed
To hear his virtues, and old age grew wise.
Juba. I shall run mad—
Mar. O Juba! Juba! Juba!
Juba. What means that voice? did she not call on Juba?
Mar. Why do I think on what he was! he's dead!
He's dead, and never knew how much I loved him.
Lucia, who knows but his poor bleeding heart,
Amidst its agonies, remembered Marcia,
And the last words he uttered called me cruel!
Alas! he knew not, hapless youth, he knew not
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba.
Juba. Where am I? do I live! or am indeed
What Marcia thinks! all is Elysium round me!
Mar. Ye dear remains of the most loved of men!
Nor modesty nor virtue here forbid
A last embrace, while thus—
Juba. —See, Marcia, see,
[*Throwing himself before her.*
The happy Juba lives! he lives to catch
That dear embrace, and to return it too
With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.
Mar. With pleasure and amaze, I stand transported!
Sure 'tis a dream! dead and alive at once!
If thou art Juba, who lies there?
Juba. A wretch,
Disguised like Juba, on a cursed design.
The tale is long, nor have I heard it out;
Thy father knows it all. I could not bear
To leave thee in the neighborhood of death,
But flew, in all the haste of love, to find thee;
I found thee weeping, and confess this once,
Am rapt with joy to see my Marcia's tears.
Mar. I've been surprised in an unguarded hour,
But must not now go back: the love, that lay
Half smothered in my breast, has broke through all
Its weak restraints, and burns in its full luster;
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.
Juba. I'm lost in ecstasy! and dost thou love,
Thou charming maid?
Mar. And dost thou live to ask it?
Juba. This, this is life indeed! life worth preserving,
Such life as Juba never felt till now!
Mar. Believe me, prince, before I thought thee dead,
I did not know myself how much I loved thee.
Juba. Oh fortunate mistake!
Mar. Oh happy Marcia!
Juba. My joy! my best beloved! my only wish!
How shall I speak the transport of my soul?
Mar. Lucia, thy arm! oh let me rest upon it!—
The vital blood, that had forsook my heart,
Returns again in such tumultuous tide,
It quite o'ercomes me. Lead to my apartment.—
O prince! I blush to think what I have said,
But fate has wrested the confession from me;
Go on, and prosper in the paths of honor,
Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,

And make the gods propitious to our love.
[*Exeunt* Marcia *and* Lucia.
Juba. I am so blest, I fear 'tis all a dream.
Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all
Thy past unkindness. I absolve my stars.
What though Numidia add her conquered towns
And provinces to swell the victor's triumph!
Juba will never at his fate repine;
Let Cæsar have the world, if Marcia's mine.

Scene IV

A March at a Distance.

Cato, Lucius.

Luc. I stand astonished! what, the bold Sempronius!
That still broke foremost through the crowd of patriots,
As with a hurricane of zeal transported,
And virtuous even to madness—
Cato. Trust me, Lucius,
Our civil discords have produced such crimes,
Such monstrous crimes, I am surprised at nothing.
—O Lucius! I am sick of this bad world!
The day-light and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter Portius.

But see where Portius comes! What means this haste?
Why are thy looks thus changed?
Por. My heart is grieved.
I bring such news as will afflict my father.
Cato. Has Cæsar shed more Roman blood?
Por. Not so.
The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercised his troops, the signal given,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse
To the south gate, where Marcus holds the watch.
I saw, and called to stop him, but in vain,
He tossed his arm aloft, and proudly told me,
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.
Cato. Perfidious men! but haste, my son, and see
Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part.
[*Exit* Por.
—Lucius, the torrent bears too hard upon me:
Justice gives way to force: the conquered world
Is Cæsar's: Cato has no business in it.
Luc. While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,
The world will still demand her Cato's presence.
In pity to mankind, submit to Cæsar,
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.
Cato. Would Lucius have me live to swell the number
Of Cæsar's slaves, or by a base submission
Give up the cause of Rome, and own a tyrant?
Luc. The victor never will impose on Cato.
Ungenerous terms. His enemies confess
The virtues of humanity are Cæsar's.
Cato. Curse on his virtues! they've undone his country.
Such popular humanity is treason—
But see young Juba! the good youth appears
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects.
Luc. Alas! poor prince! his fate deserves compassion.

Enter Juba.

Juba. I blush and am confounded to appear
Before thy presence, Cato.
Cato. What's thy crime?
Juba. I'm a Numidian.
Cato. And a brave one too.
Thou hast a Roman soul.
Juba. Hast thou not heard
Of my false countrymen?
Cato. Alas! young prince,
Falsehood and fraud shoot up in every soil,
The product of all climes—Rome has its Cæsars.
Juba. 'Tis generous thus to comfort the distressed.
Cato. 'Tis just to give applause where 'tis deserved;
Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,
Like purest gold, that, tortured in the furnace,
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.
Juba. What shall I answer thee? my ravished heart
O'erflows with secret joy: I'd rather gain
Thy praise, O Cato, than Numidia's empire.

Re-enter Portius.

Por. Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!
My brother Marcus—
Cato. Hah! what has he done?
Has he forsook his post? has he given way?
Did he look tamely on, and let 'em pass?
Por. Scarce had I left my father, but I met him
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and covered o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes.

Till, obstinately brave, and bent on death,
Oppressed with multitudes, he greatly fell.
Cato. I'm satisfied.
Por. Nor did he fall before
His sword had pierced through the false heart of Syphax.
Yonder he lies. I saw the hoary traitor
Grin in the pangs of death, and bite the ground.
Cato. Thanks to the gods! my boy has done his duty.
—Portius, when I am dead, be sure thou place
His urn near mine.
Por. Long may they keep asunder.
Luc. O Cato! arm thy soul with all its patience;
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches!
The citizens and senators, alarmed,
Have gathered round it, and attend it weeping.

Cato, *meeting the corpse.*

Welcome, my son! here lay him down, my friends,
Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds.
How beautiful is death, when earned by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? what pity is it
That we can die but once to serve our country!
Why sits this sadness on your brows, my friends?
I should have blushed if Cato's house had stood
Secure, and flourished in a civil war.
—Portius, behold thy brother, and remember
Thy life is not thine own, when Rome demands it.
Juba. Was ever man like this! [*Aside.*
Cato. Alas! my friends!
Why mourn you thus? let not a private loss
Afflict your hearts. 'Tis Rome requires our tears,
The mistress of the world, the seat of empire,
The nurse of heroes, the delight of gods,
That humbled the proud tyrants of the earth,
And set the nations free, Rome is no more.
Oh liberty! Oh virtue! Oh my country!
Juba. Behold that upright man! Rome fills his eyes
With tears, that flowed not o'er his own dead son. [*Aside.*
Cato. Whate'er the Roman virtue has subdued,
The sun's whole course, the day and year, are Cæsar's.
For him the self-devoted Decii died,
The Fabii fell, and the great Scipios conquered;
Ev'n Pompey fought for Cæsar. Oh! my friends!
How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,
The Roman empire fallen! Oh cursed ambition!
Fallen into Cæsar's hands! Our great forefathers
Had left him nought to conquer but his country.
Juba. While Cato lives, Cæsar will blush to see
Mankind enslaved, and be ashamed of empire.
Cato. Cæsar ashamed! has not he seen Pharsalia?
Luc. Cato, 'tis time thou save thyself and us.
Cato. Lose not a thought on me; I'm out of danger.
Heaven will not leave me in the victor's hand.
Cæsar shall never say, I conquered Cato.
But, oh! my friends, your safety fills my heart
With anxious thoughts: a thousand secret terrors
Rise in my soul: how shall I save my friends!
'Tis now, O Cæsar, I begin to fear thee.
Luc. Cæsar has mercy, if we ask it of him.
Cato. Then ask it, I conjure you! let him know
Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it.
Add, if you please, that I request it of him,
The virtue of my friends may pass unpunished.
—Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake.
Should I advise thee to regain Numidia,
Or seek the conqueror?—
Juba. If I forsake thee
Whilst I have life, may heaven abandon Juba!
Cato. Thy virtues, prince, if I foresee aright,
Will one day make thee great; at Rome, hereafter,
'Twill be no crime to have been Cato's friend.
Portius, draw near! my son, thou oft hast seen
Thy sire engaged in a corrupted state,
Wrestling with vice and faction: now thou seest me
Spent, overpowered, despairing of success;
Let me advise thee to retreat betimes
To thy paternal seat, the Sabine field,
Where the great Censor toiled with his own hands,
And all our frugal ancestors were blessed
In humble virtues, and a rural life.
There live retired, pray for the peace of Rome:
Content thyself to be obscurely good.

When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honor is a private station.
Por. I hope my father does not recommend
A life to Portius that he scorns himself.
Cato. Farewell, my friends! if there be any of you
Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,
Know, there are ships prepared by my command,
(Their sails already opening to the winds)
That shall convey you to the wished-for port.
Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you?
The conqueror draws near. Once more farewell!
If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet
In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.
[*Pointing to his dead son.*
There the brave youth, with love of virtue fired,
Who greatly in his country's cause expired,
Shall know he conquered. The firm patriot there,
(Who made the welfare of mankind his care)
Though still, by faction, vice, and fortune crost,
Shall find the generous labor was not lost.

ACT V

Scene I

Cato *solus, sitting in a thoughtful posture: in his hand Plato's Book on the Immortality of the Soul. A drawn sword on the table by him.*

It must be so—Plato, thou reason'st well!—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
Of falling into naught? why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself, that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, the unbounded prospect, lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a power above us,
(And that there is all nature cries aloud
Through all her works) he must delight in virtue:
And that which he delights in, must be happy.
But when! or where!—This world was made for Cæsar.
I'm weary of conjectures—This must end 'em.
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*
Thus am I doubly armed: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me:
This in a moment brings me to an end;
But this informs me I shall never die.
The soul secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the wars of elements,
The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds.
What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
This lethargy that creeps through all my senses?
Nature, oppressed and harassed out with care,
Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favor her,
That my awakened soul may take her flight,
Renewed in all her strength, and fresh with life,
An offering fit for heaven. Let guilt or fear
Disturb man's rest: Cato knows neither of 'em,
Indifferent in his choice to sleep or die.

Scene II

Cato, Portius.

Cato. But, hah! how's this, my son? why this intrusion?
Were not my orders that I would be private?
Why am I disobeyed?
Por. Alas! my father!
What means this sword, this instrument of death?
Let me convey it hence!
Cato. Rash youth, forbear!
Por. Oh let the prayers, the entreaties of your friends,
Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from you.
Cato. Wouldst thou betray me? wouldst thou give me up
A slave, a captive, into Cæsar's hands?
Retire, and learn obedience to a father,
Or know, young man!—
Por. Look not thus sternly on me;
You know I'd rather die than disobey you.
Cato. 'Tis well! again I'm master of myself.
Now, Cæsar, let thy troops beset our gates,
And bar each avenue, thy gathering fleets

O'erspread the sea, and stop up every port;
Cato shall open to himself a passage,
And mock thy hopes—
Por. Oh, sir! forgive your son,
Whose grief hangs heavy on him! Oh my father!
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so! be not displeased,
Oh be not angry with me whilst I weep,
And, in the anguish of my heart beseech you
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul!
Cato. Thou hast been ever good and dutiful. [*Embracing him.*
Weep not, my son. All will be well again.
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,
Will succor Cato, and preserve his children.
Por. Your words give comfort to my drooping heart.
Cato. Portius, thou may'st rely upon my conduct.
Thy father will not act what misbecomes him.
But go, my son, and see if aught be wanting
Among thy father's friends; see them embarked;
And tell me if the winds and seas befriend them.
My soul is quite weighed down with care, and asks
The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep. [*Exit.*
Por. My thoughts are more at ease, my heart revives.

Scene III

Portius, Marcia.

Por. O Marcia, O my sister, still there's hope!
Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all, and to his country.
He is retired to rest, and seems to cherish
Thoughts full of peace. He has despatched me hence
With orders, that bespeak a mind composed,
And studious for the safety of his friends.
Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers.
Mar. O ye immortal powers, that guard the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose,
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul
With easy dreams; remember all his virtues!
And show mankind that goodness is your care.

Scene IV

Lucia, Marcia.

Luc. Where is your father, Marcia, where is Cato?
Mar. Lucia, speak low, he is retired to rest.
Lucia, I feel a gently-dawning hope
Rise in my soul. We shall be happy still.
Luc. Alas! I tremble when I think on Cato,
In every view, in every thought I tremble!
Cato is stern, and awful as a god;
He knows not how to wink at human frailty,
Or pardon weakness that he never felt.
Mar. Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,
He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild,
Compassionate, and gentle to his friends.
Fill'd with domestic tenderness, the best,
The kindest father! I have ever found him
Easy, and good, and bounteous to my wishes.
Luc. 'Tis his consent alone can make us blest.
Marcia, we both are equally involved
In the same intricate, perplexed distress.
The cruel hand of fate, that has destroyed
Thy brother Marcus, whom we both lament—
Mar. And ever shall lament, unhappy youth!
Luc. Has set my soul at large, and now I stand
Loose of my vow. But who knows Cato's thoughts?
Who knows how yet he may dispose of Portius,
Or how he has determined of thyself?
Mar. Let him but live! commit the rest to heaven.

Enter Lucius.

Luc. Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man!
O Marcia, I have seen thy godlike father:
Some power invisible supports his soul,
And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.
A kind refreshing sleep is fallen upon him:
I saw him stretched at ease, his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams: as I drew near his couch,
He smiled, and cried, "Cæsar, thou canst not hurt me."
Mar. His mind still labors with some dreadful thought.
Luc. Lucia, why all this grief, these floods of sorrow?
Dry up thy tears, my child, we all are safe
While Cato lives—his presence will protect us.

Enter Juba.

Juba. Lucius, the horsemen are returned from viewing
The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march.
On the high point of yon bright western tower

We ken them from afar, the setting sun
Plays on their shining arms and burnished helmets,
And covers all the field with gleams of fire.
Luc. Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy father.
Cæsar is still disposed to give us terms,
And waits at distance till he hears from Cato.

Enter Portius.

Portius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance,
What tidings dost thou bring? methinks I see
Unusual gladness sparkling in thy eyes.
Por. As I was hasting to the port, where now
My father's friends, impatient for a passage,
Accuse the lingering winds, a sail arrived
From Pompey's son, who through the realms of Spain
Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome
Assert her rights and claim her liberty.
But, hark! what means that groan! Oh give me way,
And let me fly into my father's presence.
[*Exit* Portius.
Luc. Cato, amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,
And in the wild disorder of his soul
Mourns o'er his country,—Hah! a second groan!—
Heaven guard us all—
Mar. Alas! 'tis not the voice
Of one who sleeps! 'tis agonizing pain,
'Tis death is in that sound—

Re-enter Portius.

Por. Oh sight of woe!
O Marcia, what we feared is come to pass!
Cato is fallen upon his sword—
Luc. O Portius,
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,
And let us guess the rest.
Por. I've raised him up,
And placed him in his chair, where, pale and faint,
He gasps for breath, and, as his life flows from him,
Demands to see his friends. His servants weeping,
Obsequious to his orders, bear him hither.
[*The back scene opens and discovers* Cato.
Mar. O heaven, assist me in this dreadful hour
To pay the last sad duties to my father.
Juba. These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, O Cæsar!
Luc. Now is Rome fallen indeed!
[Cato *brought forward in his chair.*
Cato. Here set me down—
Portius, come near me—are my friends embarked?
Can anything be thought of for their service?
Whilst I yet live, let me not live in vain.
—O Lucius, art thou here?—thou art too good!—
Let this our friendship live between our children;
Make Portius happy in thy daughter Lucia.
Alas! poor man, he weeps!—Marcia, my daughter—
—Oh bend me forward!—Juba loves thee, Marcia.
A senator of Rome, while Rome survived,
Would not have match'd his daughter with a king,
But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinction;
Whoe'er is brave and virtuous, is a Roman.—
—I'm sick to death—Oh when shall I get loose
From this vain world, the abode of guilt and sorrow!
—And yet methinks a beam of light breaks in
On my departing soul. Alas! I fear
I've been too hasty! O ye powers that search
The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
If I have done amiss, impute it not!—
The best may err, but you are good, and—oh! [*Dies.*
Luc. There fled the greatest soul that ever warmed
A Roman breast. O Cato! O my friend!
Thy will shall be religiously observed.
But let us bear this awful corpse to Cæsar,
And lay it in his sight, that it may stand
A fence betwixt us and the victor's wrath;
Cato, though dead, shall still protect his friends.
From hence, let fierce contending nations know
What dire effects from civil discord flow.
'Tis this that shakes our country with alarms,
And gives up Rome a prey to Roman arms,
Produces fraud, and cruelty, and strife,
And robs the guilty world of Cato's life.

NICHOLAS ROWE

THE TRAGEDY OF JANE SHORE

Nicholas Rowe's father, like William Wycherley's, intended that his son should follow the law, and each parent gave his son the preparation that he thought would best fit him for his profession, but all in vain. William would not and Nicholas did not make law his career. When Rowe was fourteen years old (he was born in 1674), he won a King's Scholarship at Westminster School, where the famous Dr. Busby saw to it that his brilliant pupils got the best the school could give them. The next year his father entered him as a student of the Middle Temple, of which he himself was a member, and in due time the young man was admitted to the bar. But like Wycherley he was much more interested in literature than he was in the law, so that when his father died in 1692 leaving him a legacy of £300 a year, he forsook the bar for the theatre.

In 1700 he produced his first play, *The Ambitious Stepmother,* at Lincoln's Inn Fields, with Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, and Mrs. Barry playing the leading rôles. One can readily believe Cibber's story that Rowe fell in love with Mrs. Bracegirdle, even though nothing came of it beyond her helping to make the play a success. A year later (1701) he brought out at the same theatre *Tamerlane,* on which Cibber said "he valued himself most." The protagonist was intended to glorify William III in contrast to the miserable Bajazet, who represented Louis XIV. How the Marlovian Tamburlaine would have despised his degenerate successor! The play was acted every November 5, the anniversary of the landing of William and of the Guy Fawkes plot, till 1815.

In 1703 he presented *The Fair Penitent* at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and though Downes said that the interest held up during the first three acts but fell down in the last two, the play became at once and continued to be a brilliant success. His next play, *The Biter,* was an attempt at comedy (1704), and as Congreve said, it was "a foolish farce and was damned." Downes remarked that "it had a six days' run; the six days running it out of breath, it sickened and died." Rowe seemed to be the only one to enjoy it, for he was observed to laugh "with great vehemence" at his own wit. A play in the classical manner, *Ulysses* (1705), being, according to Downes, "all new

clothed, and excellently well performed had a successful run." *The Royal Convert* (1707) was based on early British history and ran at the Haymarket for only six nights. Then after a lapse of some years, in which Rowe was otherwise engaged, he brought out his best play, *Jane Shore,* written in imitation of Shakspere's style (1714). The next year he closed his dramatic career with *Lady Jane Grey.*

In the interval mentioned above Rowe was working on an edition of Shakspere, which came out in six volumes in 1709. It was the first critical edition ever attempted and was based on the text of the fourth folio of 1685. He proposed some happy and some unhappy emendations; he prefixed a list of dramatis personæ to each play; he divided the plays into acts and scenes; he modernized the spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Except in the case of *Romeo and Juliet* he made no attempt to collate the folio with any of the quartos, and in consequence there are many errors in the text. Nevertheless he deserves great credit for putting Shakspere within the reach of the general public. In 1709 he was appointed under-secretary to the Duke of Queensberry, Secretary of State for Scotland, and held office till the duke's death in 1711. In August he succeeded Nahum Tate as poet laureate and as such wrote indifferent birthday odes and other professional poems. He has won high praise for his translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia,* which was published in 1719, several months after his death. In 1718 he died and was buried in the Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey. Pope wrote an epitaph of fourteen lines for his tomb.

Of Rowe's seven tragedies, *The Ambitious Stepmother, Ulysses,* and *The Royal Captive* may be dismissed as quite negligible; *Tamerlane* is not much more than defunct propaganda; *Lady Jane Grey* is a "she-tragedy" which treats of the fall of a princess in a pseudo-classical manner and with a suggestion of the domestic and the sentimental; *The Fair Penitent* and *Jane Shore* are not without merit in themselves and have an important place in eighteenth-century dramatic literature. The unfortunate comedy, *The Biter,* not even a contemporary publisher thought good enough to include in an edition of Rowe's plays when *Jane Shore* had lifted him to the highest point of his popularity.

The Fair Penitent and *Jane Shore* reveal Rowe as the connecting link between Otway and Lillo. The heroic play with its impossibly valorous hero and its impossibly scrupulous heroine had died of its own violence. The Restoration comedy had fallen upon relatively virtuous days so that wit was no longer a vehicle for sin, and there were, moreover, no successors to Wycherley and Congreve. Maudlin sentimentality took the place of genuine sentiment, and pathos displaced tragic passion. The growth of democracy and the patronage of the theatre by the prosperous middle class were dethroning the kings and queens of tragic drama and were putting in their place men and women of less or no rank. The dramatists were coming to see the possibility of tragedy in the lives of persons of low estate, though

they approached the idea with caution. The prejudices of a public nursed in the old tradition that the fall of princes is the only fit subject for tragedy must be respected, and we find that Rowe preserves the noble characters of his Elizabethan source for *The Fair Penitent,* that he makes his heroine in *Jane Shore* the ex-mistress of a king, and that he reverts to the theme completely in *Lady Jane Grey.* But the members of the nobility in the first of these plays belong to the middle and not to the royal class. As Rowe himself puts it in the Prologue:

> Long had the fate of kings and empires been
> The common business of the tragic scene,
> As if misfortune made the throne her seat,
> And none could be unhappy but the great. . . .
> Therefore an humbler theme our author chose,
> A melancholy tale of private woes:
> No princes here lost royalty bemoan,
> But you shall meet with sorrows like your own.

In *Jane Shore,* though a royal duke appears in the action along with persons of high rank, they are of subordinate importance, for the real tragedy has to do with the erring wife of a London citizen. Rowe rather cleverly holds to the old tradition by linking his heroine up with deceased royalty at the same time that he creates sympathy for a woman of the commercial class.

It is significant of the change from the spacious days of Elizabeth and the robust period of the Restoration that the dominant male has given way to the weeping female. Rowe recognized the transformation, for he said in the Prologue of *Jane Shore:*

> The poets frequently might move compassion,
> And with *she*-tragedies o'errun the nation.

Pathos, sentimentality, tearful sympathy, so dear to this generation when presented on the stage, could more easily be poured out upon a suffering, penitent woman than upon a man no matter how noble. And a maximum of pathos was obtained by involving her in domestic tragedy. The theme was not new, for Heywood had already made a success with it in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1607).

The Fair Penitent is an eighteenth-century version of an Elizabethan play, *The Fatal Dowry* (1619), by Massinger and Field. The plot has been made regular, the action has been simplified by omitting, except as part of the exposition, what is contained in the first act of the earlier play, the characters have been reduced to eight, and the scene has been confined to a palace and garden with some parts of an adjacent street. All this in conformity with the pseudo-classical rules for the drama as then followed. Furthermore, Rowe reduced to obvious exposition what Massinger presented as lively action. Altamont, the hero, and his friend, Horatio, recount solely for the benefit of

the audience what each is already fully aware of, the events antecedent to the action of Rowe's play but constituting the first act of Massinger's. In this way the sympathy which is won for the hero in *The Fatal Dowry* is missed in *The Fair Penitent;* he is merely a young man who enters unawares upon a particularly unfortunate marriage. Nor is the character of the hero exalted in the course of the play; he is kept on a lower level of interest than the villain, Lothario, who is correspondingly greater than his prototype in Massinger. Likewise the scene of the seduction is presented as lively action in the earlier play, for the husband drives upon the stage his wife and her lover from an adjoining room in which they were discovered *flagrante delicto,* and then he slays the lover. In Rowe the villain recounts with lascivious recollection the story of his success with the lady. Thus the two *scènes à faire* of Massinger become mere narratives in the adaptation. In *The Fatal Dowry* the heroine falls through the machinations of others *after* her marriage, though with no great probability, and after her discovery she really does repent; but Calista, who had fallen *before* her marriage and was still in love with her seducer, repents, as a contemporary cynic remarks,

> the slippery fault
> But like the rest, it is not 'till she's caught.

The poetic justice of the eighteenth-century drama demanded that she should die, and she does, killing herself with the dagger given her for that purpose by her father. But this scene lacks the tragic quality of Massinger's when the stern father as judge condemns her to death, which her husband executes, and then he breaks down with these words:

> I looked on you as a wronged husband; but
> You closed your eyes against me as a father.
> O Beaumelle! my daughter!

The fifth act is an anticlimax; it opens with the stage "hung with black; on one side Lothario's body on a bier; on the other a table with a skull and other bones, a book, and a lamp on it." These stage directions show how completely the villain has stolen the play from the hero. The rest of the act slowly kills off the heroine, her father, and, to all appearances, the husband.

The Fair Penitent, however much it may have fallen behind its prototype, pleased its own generation exceedingly well. It was acted by the great ones of the contemporary and the later stage, Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, and Mrs. Barry, Macready, Garrick, and Mrs. Siddons. It may be that the part of Lothario had much to do with its success, for it became the star part of the performance. Lothario also suggested to Richardson the character of Lovelace in *Clarissa Harlowe,* another indication of the extensive vogue of the play. It was translated into French and adapted to the German stage in a play in which Goethe acted.

The Tragedy of Jane Shore, Rowe says on his title page, was "Written in Imitation of Shakespeare's Style," and from that day to this critics have either poured scorn on the claim or have tried to justify it. Pope in his *Art of Sinking in Poetry* misquotes a line from *Lady Jane Grey* and says that this line is the only resemblance *Jane Shore* has to Shakspere! Johnson says in his *Life of Rowe:*

"In what he thought himself an imitator of Shakespeare, it is not easy to conceive. The numbers, the diction, the sentiments, and the conduct, everything in which imitation can consist, are remote in the utmost degree from the manner of Shakespeare; whose dramas it resembles only as it is an English story, and as some of the persons have their names in history."

Sutherland,[1] however, says there is a certain Shaksperean profusion of metaphor as well as a tone which Rowe got from editing Shakspere's plays. Jackson[2] remarks that Rowe has used a theme from English history, he has broken away from the unities of time and place, and he has given a ring of Elizabethan grandeur to his rhetorical effusions.

We note several passages that seem suggested by Shakspere, such as Hastings' speech (II, i, 134-145) beginning,

> Each gust of inclination, uncontrolled,
> Sweeps through their souls, and sets 'em in an uproar;

and his later one (V, i, 111-128), especially the lines,

> I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring
> Too rough to breathe upon her,

which recalls Hamlet's

> so loving to my mother
> That he might not beteem the wonds of heaven
> Visit her face too roughly.

Jane Shore's speech (V, i, 147-152)

> Who shall say
> To power almighty, "Thou hast done enough":
> Or bid his dreadful rod of vengeance stay?

is reminiscent of Edgar's cry in *Lear* (IV, i, 26-30), especially,

> O gods! who is't can say, "I am at the worst"?
> I am worse than e'er I was.

[1] *Three Plays by Nicholas Rowe.* Edited by J. R. Sutherland, London, 1929.

[2] "Rowe's Historical Tragedies," by Alfred Jackson in *Anglia,* LIV, 307 ff.

Alicia's speech about sleep (II, i, 3-10) is a far-off whisper from Henry IV's famous soliloquy in *2 Henry IV* (III, i, 4-31), but it can be heard. Gloster's condemnation of Hastings in Act IV, i, 216-78, is almost a complete lift from *Richard III,* III, iv, 61-109.

The ultimate source of *Jane Shore* is Sir Thomas More's *Life of Richard III* (1509-13), which was translated into the English of Hardyng's *Chronicle* (1543), which in turn was slightly adapted by Hall in his *Chronicle* (1548) and this by Holinshed in his in 1577. Dramatic versions of the story appeared in *The True Tragedy of Richard III,* Shakspere's *Richard III,* and Heywood's *Edward IV.* The story is told in the *Mirror for Magistrates* and in a ballad entitled *The woeful lamentation of Jane Shore, a goldsmith's wife in London, sometime King Edward IV, his concubine.*[3] According to More's account, the historical Jane Shore was the wife of a London citizen, who because of her great beauty became the mistress of Edward IV and had considerable influence in his court. She was well known for her charity toward the poor and her kindness to her friends. When Edward died, she lived with the Lord Chamberlain, Hastings; she favored the children of the late king as against Gloster, who aspired to the throne, and she was deprived of her property and thrown out on the streets. Hastings was executed on a trumped-up charge of treason. After various misfortunes she died in utter neglect forty-four years after her fall. She is thus an example of a fall from greatness, and as she was a woman of humble origin, she is a perfect heroine for a sentimental domestic tragedy.

Rowe reduces the important historical characters to relative insignificance in order that he may increase the pathos of his heroine's fall. Edward IV is dead when the play opens, and Jane is not living in a state of sin with him or any one else. She is, on the contrary, beginning to suffer loss of property at the hands of Gloster's officers. Instead of becoming the mistress of Hastings, as she did in fact, she resists his attempt at violence. She becomes the innocent object of Alicia's jealousy and is made the victim of a despicable plot that involves both Hastings and her in ultimate ruin. The mechanics of the plot is on a par with Horatio's picking up the incriminating letter in *The Fair Penitent;* it is the old device of substituting one document for another without the victim's knowledge. She nobly defends the dispossessed children of the late king as against the lawless usurpation of power by Gloster, more because they are the rightful heirs than because they are her former lover's children. A pathetic figure wanders up and down throughout the play disguised as Dumont, who we learn later is Jane Shore's husband; at the risk of his life he saves her from the assault of Hastings, and later goes to jail for his daring. In the end she dies in his arms, thus losing over forty years of her actual life, and he goes off "to bonds or death, 'tis equally indifferent."

[3] Reprinted in the Appendix of Hart's edition, pp. 238-243.

The character of Alicia was created by Rowe, partly as a foil to Jane, partly by the dramatic irony of her conduct to show how false the friends of one's prosperity may be. She corresponds to the Mrs. Blague of the "woeful ballad,"

> To whom my jewels I had sent,
> In hope thereby to ease my want,
> When riches failed, and love grew scant;
>
> But she denied to me the same
> When in my need for them I came.

Jane gives Alicia a casket of jewels for safe keeping, but we hear nothing more of them, whether Jane did or not. When Jane comes to Alicia for protection and food, she is repulsed from the door. That Alicia goes mad is some consolation to the audience. It is Alicia that suggests to Jane she might use some of her charm upon the Protector, as she had on Edward, but all that belongs to the past; now she has nothing but regret for what she had done, though nothing but admiration for

> the first of all mankind,
> The bravest and most lovely.

She will put all memory of him out of her life, for

> He was the bane and ruin of my peace.
> This anguish and these tears, these are the legacies
> His fatal love has left me.

Alicia in contrast is a mistress who is striving to hold a weary lover, and she is unjustly jealous of Jane. Her madness may have seemed to Rowe an imitation of Shakspere's style, but it is more like the style of other Elizabethans.

In several respects *Lady Jane Grey* reverts to the older type of drama. It deals with the fall of a nine-day queen of England; it involves her fate in the struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism; it presents the conflict between love and friendship; and it disregards the unities of time and place. But to bring the story into keeping with eighteenth-century sentimentalism Pembroke is made a suitor for Lady Jane's hand in rivalry with Guilford, when as a matter of fact he was already married to her sister, and Guilford married her after Edward's death and not before. These alterations from history furnish the material for the excessive generosity of Guilford to Pembroke. Moreover, Lady Jane had been forced into marriage with Guilford and would not therefore be likely to show the devotion to her husband she does in the play. Contemporary demand called for the love element to heighten the pathos of the queen's situation.

Much of the action of the play is conveyed by means of narration with

the result that it is all rather dull. We witness the outbreak of jealousy on the part of Pembroke; we see Lady Jane offered the crown, which she accepts for the sake of Protestantism and England; we behold Guilford saving Pembroke's life by revealing to him the designs of Northumberland, Guilford's father; we are present at the arrest of the queen and Guilford; we see the prisoners rejoice over the pardon obtained for them by Pembroke only to witness their dismay when they learn they must abjure their Protestantism to make the pardon effective; and lastly we see them go to their execution rather than buy their lives at the expense of their faith. But all the machinations of the Catholics takes place off stage, especially the doings of Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester; the failure of the revolt of Northumberland, the progress of Mary and her party, and the turning of the Tower from a palace to a prison for Lady Jane and her husband are told in narrative. The appeal of Pembroke to Mary and his securing of a pardon for Lady Jane and Guilford, the machinations of Gardiner which make this pardon of no effect, these dramatic scenes are not witnessed.

The characters of the play are for the most part not much better than lay figures. Lady Jane is impossibly perfect; she is absolutely without fault in the present and without blemish in the past. She has not even the tragic flaw necessary to effective drama. Hence she neither arouses pity nor produces pathos. Guilford has no more vitality than a puppet. Pembroke is about the only person in the play that has any individuality. He really acts like a human being in his jealous rage and his repentant efforts at atonement, as well as in his indignation at being tricked. Gardiner is merely a type of the militant and unscrupulous Roman prelate, who acts as a foil to the rampant Protestantism of Rowe's day. We do not wonder, therefore, that the play had no great contemporary or later success. It was acted ten times when it was first produced, and it was not revived till 1739, when it had four performances. It was last acted in 1773.

THE TRAGEDY OF JANE SHORE

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF SHAKSPERE'S STYLE BY NICHOLAS ROWE

. . . Conjunx ubi pristinus illi
Respondet curis.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF QUEENSBERRY AND DOVER, MARQUIS OF BEVERLY, &C.

My Lord,

I have long lain under the greatest obligations to Your Grace's family, and nothing has been more in my wishes than that I might be able to discharge some part, at least, of so large a debt. But your noble birth and

fortune, the power, number, and goodness of those friends you have already, have placed you in such an independency on the rest of the world that the services I am able to render to Your Grace can never be advantageous, I am sure, nor necessary to you in any part of your life. However, the next piece of gratitude, and the only one I am capable of, is the acknowledgment of what I owe; and as this is the most public, and indeed the only way I have of doing it, Your Grace will pardon me if I take this opportunity to let the world know the duty and honor I had for your illustrious father. It is, I must confess, a very tender point to touch upon; and at the first sight may seem an ill-chosen compliment, to renew the memory of such a loss, especially to a disposition so sweet and gentle, and to a heart so sensible of filial piety as Your Grace's has been, even from your earliest childhood. But perhaps this is one of those griefs by which the heart may be made better; and if the remembrance of his death bring heaviness along with it, the honor that is paid to his memory by all good men shall wipe away those tears, and the example of his life set before your eyes shall be of the greatest advantage to Your Grace in the conduct and future disposition of your own.

In a character so amiable as that of the Duke of Queensberry was, there can be no part so proper to begin with as that which was in him, and is in all good men, the foundation of all other virtues, either religious or civil—I mean good nature. Good nature, which is friendship between man and man, good breeding in courts, charity in religion, and the true spring of all beneficence in general. This was a quality he possessed in as great a measure as any gentleman I ever had the honor to know. It was this natural sweetness of temper which made him the best man in the world to live with, in any kind of relation. It was this made him a good master to his servants, a good friend to his friends, and the tenderest father to his children. For the last, I can give no better voucher than Your Grace, and for the rest I may appeal to all that have had the honor to know him. There was a spirit and pleasure in his conversation which always enlivened the company he was in, which, together with a certain easiness and frankness in his disposition, that did not at all derogate from the dignity of his birth and character, rendered him infinitely agreeable. And as no man had a more delicate taste of natural wit, his conversations always abounded in good humor.

For those parts of his character which related to the public, as he was a nobleman of the first rank and a minister of state, they will be best known by the great employments he passed through; all which he discharged worthily as to himself, justly to the prince who employed him, and advantageously for his country. There is no occasion to enumerate his several employments, as Secretary of State, for Scotland in particular, for Britain in general, or Lord High Commissioner of Scotland; which last office he bore more than once, but at no time more honorably, and (as I hope) more happily, both for the present age and for posterity, than when he laid the foundation for the British Union. The constancy and address which he manifested on that

occasion are still fresh in everybody's memory, and perhaps when our children shall reap those benefits from that work which some people do not foresee and hope for now, they may remember the Duke of Queensberry with that gratitude which such a piece of service done to his country deserves.

He showed upon all occasions a strict and immediate attachment to the crown, in the legal service of which no man could exert himself more dutifully nor more strenuously. And at the same time no man gave more bold and more generous evidences of the love he bore to his country. Of the latter, there can be no better proof than the share he had in the late happy revolution; nor of the former than that dutiful respect and unshaken fidelity which he preserved for her present Majesty, ev'n to his last moments.

With so many good and great qualities, it is not at all strange that he possessed so large a share as he was known to have, in the esteem of the Queen and her immediate predecessor; nor that those great princes should repose the highest confidence in him: and at the same time, what a pattern has he left behind him for the nobility in general, and for Your Grace in particular, to copy after.

Your Grace will forgive me if my zeal for your welfare and honor (which nobody has more at heart than myself) shall press you with some more than ordinary warmth to the imitation of your noble father's virtues. You have, my Lord, many great advantages which may encourage you to go on in pursuit of this reputation. It has pleased God to give you naturally that sweetness of temper which, as I have before hinted, is the foundation of all good inclinations. You have the honor to be born not only of the greatest, but of the best parents; of a gentleman generally beloved, and generally lamented; and of a lady adorned with all the virtues that enter into the character of a good wife, an admirable friend, and a most indulgent mother. The natural advantages of your mind have been cultivated by the most proper arts and manners of education; you have the care of many noble friends, and especially of an excellent uncle, to watch over you in the tenderness of your youth. You set out amongst the first of mankind, and I doubt not but your virtues will be equal to the dignity of your rank.

That I may live to see Your Grace eminent for the love of your country, for your service and duty to your prince, and in convenient time, adorned with all the honors that have ever been conferred upon your noble family; that you may be distinguished to posterity as the bravest, greatest, and best man of the age you live in, is the hearty wish, and prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, and

Most faithful, humble servant,

N. Rowe

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. WILKS

To-night, if you have brought your good old taste,
We'll treat you with a downright English feast—
A tale, which told long since in homely wise,
Hath never failed of melting gentle eyes.
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame
Because recording ballads chaunt her name;
Those venerable ancient song-enditers
Soared many a pitch above our modern writers:
They caterwauled in no romantic ditty,
Sighing for Phyllis's, or Chloe's pity.
Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain,
And sung her by her Christ'an name—'twas Jane.
Our numbers may be more refined than those,
But what we've gained in verse, we've lost in prose.
Their words no shuffling, double-meaning knew,
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.
In such an age, immortal Shakspere wrote,
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught;
With rough, majestic force he moved the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.
Our humble author does his steps pursue;
He owns he had the mighty bard in view,
And in these scenes has made it more his care
To rouse the passions than to charm the ear.
Yet for those gentle beaux who love the chime,
The end of Acts still jingle into rime.
The ladies, too, he hopes, will not complain;
Here are some subjects for a softer strain—
A nymph forsaken, and a perjured swain.
What most he fears is, lest the dames should frown,
The dames of wit and pleasure about town,
To see our picture drawn unlike their own.
But lest that error should provoke to fury
The hospitable hundreds of Old Drury,
He bids me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,
She doled about the charitable pence,
Built hospitals, turned saint, and died long since.
For her example, whatsoe'er we make it,
They have their choice to let alone or take it:

Though few, as I conceive, will think it meet
To weep so sorely for a sin so sweet;
Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,
To rise in tragedy two ages hence.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN	WOMEN
DUKE OF GLOSTER.	ALICIA.
LORD HASTINGS.	JANE SHORE.
CATESBY.	
SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE.	
BELLMOUR.	
DUMONT, [SHORE *in disguise*].	
[EARL OF DERBY].	

Several Lords of the Council, Guards, and Attendants.

SCENE.—LONDON.

TIME.—ABOUT 1483.

ACT I

SCENE I

The Tower.

Enter the DUKE OF GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, AND CATESBY.

Glos. Thus far success attends upon our councils,
And each event has answered to my wish;
The queen and all her upstart race are quelled;
Dorset is banished, and her brother Rivers
Ere this lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have with joint concurrence named me
Protector of the realm. My brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York, are lodged
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs,
Does not this business wear a lucky face?
The scepter and the golden wreath of royalty
Seem hung within my reach.
Ratc. Then take 'em to you
And wear them long and worthily; you are
The last remaining male of princely York:
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of 'em)
And therefore on your sovereignty and rule
The common-weal does her dependence make,
And leans upon your highness's able hand.
Cate. And yet to-morrow does the council meet
To fix a day for Edward's coronation:
Who can expound this riddle?
Glos. That can I.
Those lords are each one my approved, good friends,
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom;
And howsoever busy they may seem,
And diligent to bustle in the state,
Their zeal goes on no farther than we lead,
And at our bidding stays.
Cate. Yet there is one,
And he amongst the foremost in his power,
Of whom I wish your highness were assured:
For me—perhaps it is my nature's fault——
I own, I doubt of his inclining, much.
Glos. I guess the man at whom your words would point:
Hastings——
Cate. The same.
Glos. He bears me great good will.
Cate. 'Tis true, to you, as to the Lord Protector
And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service:
But were he bid to cry, "God save King Richard,"
Then tell me in what terms he would reply.
Believe me, I have proved the man and found him.
I know he bears a most religious reverence
To his dead master Edward's royal memory,
And whither that may lead him is most plain;
Yet more—one of that stubborn sort he is
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,

They call it honor, honesty, and faith,
And sooner part with life than let it go.
Glos. And yet, this tough, impracticable heart
Is governed by a dainty-fingered girl.
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures;
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,
And take the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules.
Ratc. The fair Alicia,
Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.
Cate. I fear he fails in his allegiance there;
Or my intelligence is false, or else
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,
And fed him 'till he loathes.
Glos. No more; he comes.

Enter Lord Hastings.

Hast. Health and the happiness of many days
Attend upon your grace.
Glos. My good Lord Chamberlain!
W'are much beholden to your gentle friendship.
Hast. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.
Glos. In right good time! Speak out your pleasure freely.
Hast. I am to move your highness in behalf
Of Shore's unhappy wife.
Glos. Say you? of Shore?
Hast. Once a bright star that held her place on high:
The first and fairest of our English dames
While royal Edward held the sovereign rule.
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,
Her waning form no longer shall incite
Envy in woman, or desire in man.
She never sees the sun but through her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.
Glos. Marry! the times are badly changed with her
From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity,
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,
Piping and playing, minstrelsie and masquing,
Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A show of mummery without a meaning.
My brother—rest and pardon to his soul!—
Is gone to his account; for this his minion,
The revel-rout is done.—But you were speaking
Concerning her.—I have been told that you
Are frequent in your visitation to her.
Hast. No farther, my good lord, than friendly pity
And tender-hearted charity allow.
Glos. Go to! I did not mean to chide you for it.
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you
To cherish the distressed.—On with your tale.
Hast. Thus is it, gracious sir, that certain officers,
Using the warrant of your mighty name,
With insolence unjust and lawless power
Have seized upon the lands which late she held
By grant from her great master Edward's bounty.
Glos. Somewhat of this, but slightly, have I heard;
And though some counsellors of forward zeal,
Some of most ceremonious sanctity
And bearded wisdom, often have provoked
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her,
Yet still in kind compassion of her weakness
And tender memory of Edward's love,
I have withheld the merciless, stern law
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.
Hast. Good Heav'n, who renders mercy back for mercy,
With open-handed bounty shall repay you:
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.
Glos. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only;
Our farther and more full extent of grace
Is given to your request. Let her attend,
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong
At full redressed. But I have other news
Which much import us both, for still my fortunes
Go hand in hand with yours; our common foes,
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,
Have fall'n their haughty crests.—That for your privacy. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

An apartment in Jane Shore's *house.*

Enter Bellmour *and* Dumont.

Bell. How she has lived, you've heard my tale already;
The rest, your own attendance in her family,
Where I have found the means this day to place you,
And nearer observation best will tell you.
See! with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,
Or grief besets her head.—Save you, fair lady,
The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.
J. Sh. My gentle neighbor! your good wishes still
Pursue my hapless fortunes. Ah! good Bellmour,
How few, like thee, enquire the wretched out,
And court the offices of soft humanity;
Like thee, reserve their raiment for the naked,
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep!
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine
To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman
Whose friendly service you commended to me?
Bell. Madam! it is.
J. Sh. [*Aside*]. A venerable aspect!
Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,
And worthily becomes his silver locks;
He wears the marks of many years well spent,
Of virtue, truth well tried, and wise experience;
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well. [*To* DUMONT.
Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill,
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance
Which my poor hand and humble proof can give.
But to supply those golden vantages
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth,
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership
Of all that little good the world allows me.
Dum. You overrate me much, and all my answer
Must be my future truth; let that speak for me
And make up my deserving.
J. Sh. Are you of England?
Dum. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth;
At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometimes I have known more plenteous days
Than those which now my failing age affords.
J. Sh. Alas! at Antwerp! [*Weeping*]—Oh, forgive my tears!
They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.
You knew perhaps—oh, grief! oh, shame!—my husband.
Dum. I knew him well—but stay this flood of anguish;
The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows.
Three years and more are past since I was bid,
With many of our common friends, to wait him
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,
According to our church's reverend rite,
And saw him laid in hallowed ground to rest.
J. Sh. Oh! that my soul had known no joy but him;
That I had lived within his guiltless arms,
And dying slept in innocence beside him!
But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship,
And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. The lady Alicia
Attends your leisure.
J. Sh. I wish to see her.
[*Exit Servant.*
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire.
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you
Of each unhappy circumstance in which
Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.
[*Exeunt* BELLMOUR *and* DUMONT.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you thus?
Still shall these sighs heave after one another;
These trickling drops chase one another still,
As if the posting messengers of grief
Could overtake the hours fled far away,
And make old time come back?
J. Sh. No, my Alicia,
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,
There is no hour of all my life o'er past,
That I could wish should take its turn again.
Alic. And yet some of those days my friend has known;
Some of those years might pass for golden ones—
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,
Whose beauty is our sovereign good, and gives us
Our reasons to rebel and power to reign—
What could we more than to behold a monarch,

Lovely, renowned, a conqueror, and young,
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?
J. Sh. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,
The goodly pride of all our English youth;
He was the very joy of all that saw him,
Formed to delight, to love, and to persuade.
Impassive spirits and angelic natures
Might have been charmed—like yielding human weakness,
Stooped from their Heav'n and listened to his talking.
But what had I to do with kings and courts?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;
And that he was the first of all mankind,
The bravest and most lovely, was my curse.
Alic. Sure, something more than fortune joined your loves;
Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere matched so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.
J. Sh. Name him no more:
He was the bane and ruin of my peace.
This anguish and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandoned to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seized almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.
Alic. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows;
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes and let 'em shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mists.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern protector,
And soothe his savage temper with thy beauty.
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be moved to pity and redress thee.
J. Sh. My form, alas! has long forgot to please;
The scene of beauty and delight is changed,
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes;
But haggard Grief, lean-looking, sallow Care,
And pining Discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn.
One only shadow of a hope is left me;
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.
Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause?
But wherefore should he not? Hastings has eyes;
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty.
But yours shall charm him long.
J. Sh. Away, you flatterer!
Nor charge his generous meaning with a weakness
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has proved,
Too many giddy, foolish hours are gone,
And in fantastic measures danced away:
May the remaining few know only friendship.
So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart
A partner there; I will give up mankind,
Forget the transports of increasing passion,
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.
Alic. [*embracing*]. Live! live and reign forever in my bosom,
Safe and unrivalled there possess thy own;
And you, ye brightest of the stars above,
Ye saints that once were women here below,
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
Which here to this my other self I vow.
If I not hold her nearer to my soul,
Than ev'ry other joy the world can give,
Let poverty, deformity and shame,
Distraction and despair seize me on earth;
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.
J. Sh. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true;
Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee.
[*Giving a casket.*
Receive this all that I can call my own,
And let it rest unknown and safe with thee:
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
And shelter from the storm.
Alic. My all is thine;
One common hazard shall attend us both,
And both be fortunate or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful, doubting heart be still;
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done
Shall die forgotten all; the poor, the pris'ner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,

Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
Shall cry to Heav'n, and pull a blessing on thee;
Ev'n man—the merciless insulter man—
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness,
Forget thy failings and record thy praise.
J. Sh. Why should I think that man will do for me
What yet he never did for wretches like me?
Mark by what partial justice we are judged;
Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And such the curse entailed upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove
Free and unquestioned through the wilds of love;
While woman—sense and nature's easy fool—
If poor, weak woman swerve from virtue's rule,
If, strongly charmed, she leave the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray;
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
And one false step entirely damns her fame.
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
In vain look back to what she was before;
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

Scene continues.

Enter Alicia, *speaking to* Jane Shore *as entering.*

Alic. No farther, gentle friend; good angels guard you,
And spread their gracious wings about your slumbers.
The drowsy night grows on the world, and now
The busy craftsman and the o'er-labored hind
Forget the travail of the day in sleep.
Care only wakes, and moping Pensiveness;
With meagre, discontented looks they sit,
And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
Such vigils must I keep; so wakes my soul,
Restless and self-tormented! O false Hastings!
Thou hast destroyed my peace.
[*Knocking without.*
What noise is that?
What visitor is this who with bold freedom
Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest
With such a rude approach?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. One from the court;
Lord Hastings (as I think) demands my lady.

Alic. Hastings! Be still my heart, and try to meet him
With his own arts—with falsehood.—But he comes.

Enter Lord Hastings. *Speaks to a Servant at entering.*

Hast. Dismiss my train and wait alone without.
—Alicia here! Unfortunate encounter!
But be it as it may.
Alic. When humbly, thus,
The great descend to visit the afflicted;
When thus unmindful of their rest, they come
To soothe the sorrows of the midnight mourner;
Comfort comes with them, like the golden sun,
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence,
And cheers the melancholy house of care.
Hast. 'Tis true, I would not over-rate a courtesy,
Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it
To nip and blast its favor like a frost;
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
That your fair friend may know I have prevailed.
The lord protector has received her suit,
And means to show her grace.
Alic. My friend! my lord!
Hast. Yes, lady, yours: none has a right more ample
To task my power than you.
Alic. I want the words
To pay you back a compliment so courtly;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wo' not die your debtor.
Hast. 'Tis well, madam.
But I would see your friend.
Alic. O thou false lord!
I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull indifference.
But 'two'not be; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee.
Hast. Are you wise?
Have you the use of reason? Do you wake?
What means this raving? this transporting passion?
Alic. O thou cool traitor! thou insulting tyrant!
Dost thou behold my poor distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means? Art thou not false?
Am I not scorned, forsaken, and abandoned——
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy;
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,

Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons;
And all because my soul has doted on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable?
Hast. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love?
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies;
These never ceasing wailings and complainings;
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment rise to madness?
Alic. What proof, alas! have I not given of love?
What have I not abandoned to thy arms?
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,
A spotless fame and an unblemished race,
The peace of innocence and pride of virtue?
My prodigality has giv'n thee all;
And now I have nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.
Hast. Why am I thus pursued from place to place,
Kept in the view, and crossed at every turn?
In vain I fly, and like a hunted deer
Scud o'er the lawns and hasten to the covert;
Ere I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.
Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits.
Hast. If you are wise and prize your peace of mind,
Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy;
Let not that devil which undoes your sex,
That cursed Curiosity, seduce you,
To hunt for needless secrets which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet, but once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep forever from you.
Go to!—be yet advised,——
Alic. Dost thou in scorn
Preach patience to my rage? and bid me tamely
Sit like a poor, contented idiot down,
Nor dare to think thou hast wronged me?—Ruin seize thee,
And swift Perdition overtake thy treachery!
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?
Hast thou endeavored once to hide thy falsehood?
To hide it, might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shown thee half unwilling to undo me.
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity;
Thy words and all thy actions have confessed it.
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villainy.
Hast. Well then, I own my heart has broke your chains.
Patient I bore the painful bondage long:
At length my generous love disdains your tyranny;
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
Vexatious days, and jarring joyless nights,
Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,
Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.
Alic. You triumph! do! And with gigantic pride
Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink;
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
Nor send his light'nings forth. No more his justice
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.
Hast. Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,
Be present to me now, my better angel!
Preserve me from the storm which threatens now,
And if I have beyond atonement sinned,
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
So I escape the fury of that tongue.
Alic. Thy pray'r is heard,—I go,—but know, proud lord,
Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,
Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness placed,
With royal favor guarded round and graced;
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmost height;
Then like thy fate, superior will I sit,
And view thee fall'n and groveling at my feet;
See thy last breath with indignation go,
And tread thee sinking to the shades below.
[*Exit* Alicia.
Hast. How fierce a fiend is passion. With what wildness,
What tyranny untamed, it reigns in woman.
Unhappy sex! whose easy, yielding temper
Gives way to every appetite alike;
Each gust of inclination, uncontrolled,
Sweeps through their souls and sets 'em in an uproar;
Each motion of the heart rises to fury,
And love in their weak bosoms is a rage
As terrible as hate and as destructive.

So the wind roars o'er the wide senseless ocean,
And heaves the billows of the boiling deep,
Alike from north, from south, from east, and west;
With equal force the tempest blows by turns
From every corner of the seaman's compass.
But soft ye now—for here comes one disclaims
Strife and her wrangling train. Of equal elements,
Without one jarring atom, was she formed,
And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter Jane Shore.

—Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
To greet you with the tidings of success.
The princely Gloster has vouchsafed you hearing;
To-morrow he expects you at the court.
There plead your cause with never failing beauty;
Speak all your griefs and find a full redress.

J. Sh. [*kneeling*]. Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend,
Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Hast. Rise, gentle dame. You wrong my meaning much;
Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

J. Sh. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my speaking;
But though my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank you;
And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one prayer for you,
If prayers of such a wretch are heard on high,
That Heav'n will pay you back when most you need
The grace and goodness you have shown to me.

Hast. If there be aught of merit in my service,
Impute it there—where most 'tis due—to love;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

J. Sh. Alas! my lord——

Hast. Why bend thy eyes to earth?
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow?
Why breathes that sigh, my love? And wherefore falls
This trickling show'r of tears to stain thy sweetness?

J. Sh. If pity dwells within your noble breast,
(As sure it does) oh, speak not to me thus!

Hast. Can I behold thee and not speak of love?
Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses
Till my soul faints and sickens with desire.
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still?

J. Sh. Cast round your eyes
Upon the highborn beauties of the court;
Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unsullied all, and spotless;
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,
To fill your arms and bless your virtuous bed,
Nor turn your eyes this way, where sin and misery,
Like loathsome weeds, have overrun the soil,
And the destroyer Shame has laid all waste.

Hast. What means this peevish, this fantastic change?
Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face?
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles?
Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth,
That cheerful heart, which used to dance forever,
And cast a day of gladness all around thee?

J. Sh. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach,
And for those foolish days of wanton pride
My soul is justly humbled to the dust.
All tongues, like yours, are licensed to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.
Yet let the saints be witness to this truth,
That now, though late, I look with horror back;
That I detest my wretched self, and curse
My past polluted life. All-judging Heav'n,
Who knows my crimes, has seen my sorrow for them.

Hast. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough
To whine and mortify thyself with penance
When the decaying sense is palled with pleasure,
And weary nature tires in her last stage.
Then weep and tell thy beads, when alt'ring rheums
Have stained the lustre of thy starry eyes,
And failing palsies shake thy withered hand.
The present moments claim more generous use;
Thy beauty, night, and solitude reproach me

For having talked thus long.—Come, let me press thee, [*Laying hold on her.*
Pant on thy bosom, sink into thy arms,
And lose myself in the luxurious fold.
J. Sh. Never! By those chaste lights above, I swear,
My soul shall never know pollution more! [*Kneeling.*
Forbear, my lord!—Here let me rather die;
Let quick Destruction overtake me here,
And end my sorrows and my shame forever.
Hast. Away with this perverseness,—'tis too much—— [*Striving.*
Nay, if you strive—'tis monstrous affectation.
J. Sh. Retire! I beg you leave me——
Hast. Thus to coy it!—
With one who knows you, too.
J. Sh. For mercy's sake——
Hast. Ungrateful woman! is it thus you pay
My services?—
J. Sh. Abandon me to ruin
Rather than urge me——
Hast. [*pulling her*]. This way to your chamber;
There if you struggle——
J. Sh. [*crying out*]. Help! oh, gracious Heaven!
Help! Save me! Help!

Enter Dumont; *he interposes.*

Dum. My lord! for honor's sake——
Hast. Hah! What art thou?—Begone!
Dum. My duty calls me
To my attendance on my mistress here.
J. Sh. For pity let me go!
Hast. Avaunt! base groom——
At distance wait and know thy office better.
Dum. Forego your hold, my Lord! 'tis most unmanly,
This violence——
Hast. Avoid the room this moment,
Or I will tread thy soul out.
Dum. No, my lord——
The common ties of manhood call me now,
And bid me thus stand up in the defence
Of an oppressed, unhappy, helpless woman.
Hast. And dost thou know me? Slave!
Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!
I know thee well, know thee with each advantage
Which wealth, or power, or noble birth can give thee.
I know thee, too, for one who stains those honors,
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.
Hast. 'Tis wondrous well! I see, my saint-like dame,
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.
Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unmannered railer,
Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou shouldst find
I have as daring spirits in my blood
As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted.
And though no gaudy titles graced my birth—
Titles, the servile courtier's lean reward,
Sometimes the pay of virtue, but more oft
The hire which greatness gives to slaves and sycophants—
Yet Heav'n, that made me honest, made me more
Than ever king did when he made a lord.
Hast. [*draws and strikes him*]. Insolent villain! Henceforth let this teach thee
The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.
Dum. Nay then, my lord, [*drawing*] learn you by this how well
An arm resolved can guard its master's life. [*They fight.*
J. Sh. Oh, my distracting fears! hold, for sweet Heav'n!

[Dumont *disarms* Lord Hastings.

Hast. Confusion! baffled by a base-born hind!
Dum. Now, haughty sir, where is our difference now?
Your life is in my hand, and did not honor,
The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue
(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you)
Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.
But wear your sword again, and know, a lord
Opposed against a man is but a man.
Hast. Curse on my failing hand! Your better fortune
Has giv'n you vantage o'er me; but perhaps
Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance. [*Exit.*
J. Sh. Alas! what have you done! Know you the pow'r,
The mightiness that waits upon this lord?
Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress; 'tis a cause
In which Heav'n's guard shall wait you. Oh, pursue,
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul
Which urge you on to virtue; let not danger,
Nor the encumb'ring world, make faint your purpose!
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
Bring you to bliss, and crown your end with peace.
J. Sh. Oh, that my head were laid, my sad eyes closed,
And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest;
My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

Dum. Would you be happy? Leave this fatal place;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighborhood,
Where Innocence is shamed, and blushing Modesty
is made the scorner's jest; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin wear the masques of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.
J. Sh. Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,
Of friends and all the means of life bereft?
Dum. Bellmour, whose friendly care still wakes to serve you,
Has found you out a little peaceful refuge.
Far from the court and the tumultuous city,
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,
Built for convenience and the use of life.
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,
A little garden, and a limpid brook,
By nature's own contrivance, seem disposed——
No neighbors but a few poor simple clowns,
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest.
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place
When the contending nobles shook the land
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.
Your virtue, there, may find a safe retreat
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.
J. Sh. Can there be so much happiness in store!
A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.
Haste then, and thither let us wing our flight,
Ere the clouds gather and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.
Dum. Will you then go? You glad my very soul.
Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me;
Plenty, and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,
And make your latter days of life most happy.
Oh, lady!—but I must not, cannot tell you
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,
And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
Where she may trust her little tuneful brood,
Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow;
Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
Sits there and wanders through the grove no more.
Warbling she charms it each returning night,
And loves it with a mother's dear delight.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I

The Court.

Enter ALICIA *with a paper.*

Alic. This paper, to the great Protector's hand,
With care and secrecy must be conveyed;
His bold ambition now avows its aim,
To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes
And much devoted to the orphan king;
On that I build. This paper meets his doubts,
And marks my hated rival as the cause
Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
O Jealousy! Thou bane of pleasing friendship,
Thou worst invader of our tender bosoms;
How does thy rancor poison all our softness,
And turn our gentle natures into bitterness!
—See where she comes! Once my heart's dearest blessing,
Now my changed eyes are blasted with her beauty,
Loathe that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE.

J. Sh. Now whither shall I fly to find relief?
What charitable hand will aid me now?
Will stay my failing steps, support my ruins,
And heal my wounded mind with balmy comfort?
Oh, my Alicia!
Alic. What new grief is this?
What unforeseen misfortune has surprised thee,
That racks thy tender heart thus?
J. Sh. Oh! Dumont!
Alic. Say! What of him?
J. Sh. That friendly, honest man,
Whom Bellmour brought of late to my assistance;
On whose kind cares, whose diligence and faith,
My surest trust was built, this very morn
Was seized on by the cruel hand of pow'r,
Forced from my house, and borne away to prison.
Alic. To prison, said you! Can you guess the cause?
J. Sh. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me

Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on him.

Alic. Lord Hastings! ha!

J. Sh. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contained;
Here, as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,
And move him for redress.

[*She gives the paper to* ALICIA, *who opens and seems to read it.*

Alic. [*aside*]. Now for a wile
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
Forever from my perjured Hastings' eyes.
The wanderer may then look back to me,
And turn to his forsaken home again.
[*Pulling out the other paper.*
Their fashions are the same; it cannot fail.

J. Sh. But see, the great Protector comes this way,
Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. [*aside*]. For love and vengeance! [*She gives her the other paper.*

Enter the DUKE OF GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, *Courtiers, and other Attendants.*

J. Sh. [*kneeling*]. O noble Gloster, turn thy gracious eye,
Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint!
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman
Entreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants and save her life from perishing.

Glos. [*receiving the paper, and raising her*].
Arise, fair dame, and dry your watery eyes.
Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart
That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.
Y'have got a noble friend to be your advocate;
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure;
Those once despatched, we'll call for you anon
And give your griefs redress. Go to! be comforted.

J. Sh. Good heavens repay your highness for this pity,
And shower down blessings on your princely head.
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame
That nodding totters with oppressive woe,
And sinks beneath its load.
[*Exeunt* JANE SHORE *and* ALICIA.

Glos. Now, by my halidome!
Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions;
The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock. [*Seeming to read.*
What says her paper?
Ha! What is this? Come nearer, Ratcliffe! Catesby!
Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning. [*He reads.*
"Wonder not, Princely Gloster, at the notice
This paper brings you from a friend unknown.
Lord Hastings is inclined to call you master,
And kneel to Richard, as to England's king;
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
And draws his service to King Edward's sons.
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
And he, and all his powers, attend on you."

Ratc. 'Tis wonderful!

Cate. The means by which it came
Yet stranger too!

Glos. You saw it given but now.

Ratc. She could not know the purport.

Glos. No, 'tis plain——
She knows it not; it levels at her life;
Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
The meddling harlot! dear she should abide it.

Cate. What hand soe'er it comes from, be assured,
It means your highness well——

Glos. Upon the instant
Lord Hastings will be here. This morn I mean
To prove him to the quick; then if he flinch,
No more but this—away with him at once.
He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes!
Draw nearer this way and observe me well.
[*They whisper.*

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Hast. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still;
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
And worn to urge desire.—I must possess her;
The groom who lift his saucy hand against me,
Ere this is humbled and repents his daring.
Perhaps ev'n she may profit by th'example,
And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

Glos. This do, and wait me ere the Council sits.
[*Exeunt* RATCLIFFE *and* CATESBY.
My lord, y'are well encountered; here has been
A fair petitioner this morning with us.
Believe me, she has won me much to pity her.

Alas! her gentle nature was not made
To buffet with adversity. I told her
How worthily her cause you had befriended,
How much for your good sake we meant to do,
That you had spoke, and all things should be well.
Hast. Your highness binds me ever to your service.
Glos. You know your friendship is most potent with us,
And shares our power. But of this enough,
For we have other matters for your ear.
The state is out of tune; distracting fears
And jealous doubts jar in our public councils;
Amidst the wealthy city murmurs rise,
Lewd railings and reproach on those that rule,
With open scorn of government; hence credit
And public trust 'twixt man and man are broke.
The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
Who therefore curse the great and threat rebellion.
Hast. The resty knaves are overrun with ease,
As plenty ever is the nurse of faction.
If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
Because the reins of power are held too slack,
And reverend authority of late
Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.
Glos. Beshrew my heart! but you have well divined
The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm
When the crown sits upon a baby brow?
Plainly to speak, hence comes the general cry
And sum of all complaint: 'twill ne'er be well
With England (thus they talk) while children govern.
Hast. 'Tis true the king is young; but what of that?
We feel no want of Edward's riper years
While Gloster's valor and most princely wisdom
So well support our infant sovereign's place—
His youth's support, and guardian of his throne.
Glos. The Council (much I'm bound to thank 'em for it)
Have placed a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of pow'r, and subject to control,
Scorned by my foes, and useless to my friends.
Oh, worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence
At large to lord it in the common-weal.
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
Thus fear and doubt betwixt disputed titles.
Hast. Of this I am to learn; as not supposing
A doubt like this——
Glos. Aye, marry, but there is—
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How on a late occasion, Doctor Shaw
Has moved the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's issue, by right grave authority
Of learning and religion plainly proving
A bastard scion never should be grafted
Upon a royal stock? from thence, at full
Discoursing on my brother's former contract
To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him——
Hast. Ill befall
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!
By Heav'n, 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.
Did not the king,
Our royal master Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sovereign rule should take henceforward?
When shall the deadly hate of faction cease,
When shall our long divided land have rest,
If every peevish, moody malcontent
Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brains
Each day with some fantastic, giddy change?
Glos. What if some patriot for the public good
Should vary from your scheme, new mold the state?
Hast. Curse on the innovating hand attempts it!
Remember him, the villain! righteous Heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance! Blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels; who for wealth,
For pow'r, the pride of greatness or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars.
Glos. You go too far, my lord.
Hast. Your highness's pardon——
Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth the battles;
When, like a matron butchered by her sons,
And cast beside some common way a spectacle
Of horror and affright to passers-by,
Our groaning country bled at every vein;

When murders, rapes, and massacres prevailed;
When churches, palaces, and cities blazed;
When insolence and barbarism triumphed,
And swept away distinction? Peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles. Low were laid
The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
And desolation covered all the land.
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart
Whose damned ambition would renew those horrors,
And set, once more, that scene of blood before us?

Glos. How now! So hot!

Hast. So brave, and so resolved.

Glos. Is then our friendship of so little moment
That you could arm your hand against my life?

Hast. I hope your highness does not think I meant it;
No, Heaven forefend that e'er your princely person
Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Glos. Oh! noble Hastings! nay, I must embrace you! [*Embraces him.*
By holy Paul! y'are a right honest man;
The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise
If, when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,
And live your king and country's best support:
For me, I ask no more than honor gives—
To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.

Hast. Accept what thanks a grateful heart should pay.
Oh! princely Gloster! judge me not ungentle,
Of manners rude, and insolent of speech
If, when the public safety is in question,
My zeal flows warm and eager from my tongue.

Glos. Enough of this: to deal in wordy compliment
Is much against the plainness of my nature.
I judge you by myself, a clear true spirit,
And as such once more join you to my bosom.
—Farewell, and be my friend.

[*Exit* Gloster.

Hast. I am not read,
Not skilled and practised in the arts of greatness,
To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
The duke is surely noble; but he touched me
Ev'n on the tend'rest point, the master-string
That makes most harmony or discord to me.
I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
And my soul's darling passion stands confessed—
Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
Beyond myself I prize my native land.
On this foundation would I build my fame,
And emulate the Greek and Roman name,
Think England's peace bought cheaply with my blood,
And die with pleasure for my country's good. [*Exit.*

ACT IV

Scene I [*Continued*]

Enter Duke of Gloster, Ratcliffe, *and* Catesby.

Glos. This was the sum of all, that he would brook
No alteration in the present state.
Marry! at last, the testy gentleman
Was almost moved to bid us bold defiance;
But there I dropped the argument, and changing
The first design and purpose of my speech,
I praised his good affection to young Edward,
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.
Proceed we then to this fore-mentioned matter
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

Ratc. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wished
This lord had stood with us. His friends are wealthy,
Thereto, his own possessions large and mighty;
The vassals and dependants on his power
Firm in adherence, ready, bold, and many.
His name had been of 'vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

Glos. This wayward and perverse declining from us
Has warranted at full the friendly notice
Which we this morn received. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cate. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate
And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,
The very means immediate to her being,
The bounty of your hand? Why does she live
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
To speak, to act, to think as you command?

Ratc. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your message,
Teach every grace to smile in your behalf
And her deluding eyes to gloat for you;

His ductile reason will be wound about,
Be led and turned again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.
Glos. Your counsel likes me well; it shall be followed.
She waits without, attending on her suit;
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.
[*Exeunt* RATCLIFFE *and* CATESBY.
How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is——
A moppet made of prettiness and pride,
That oft'ner does her giddy fancies change
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colors.
Now shame upon it! Was our reason given
For such a use—to be thus puffed about
Like a dry leaf, an idle straw, a feather,
The sport of every whistling blast that blows?
Beshrew my heart, but it is wond'rous strange;
Sure, there is something more than witchcraft in them
That masters ev'n the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Oh! you are come most fitly. We have pondered
On this your grievance: and though some there are—
Nay, and those great ones too—who would enforce
The rigor of our power to afflict you
And bear a heavy hand, yet fear not you.
We've ta'en you to our favor; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.
J. Sh. The blessings of a heart with anguish broken
And rescued from despair attend your highness!
Alas! my gracious lord! what have I done
To kindle such relentless wrath against me?
If in the days of all my past offences,
When most my heart was lifted with delight,
If I withheld my morsel from the hungry,
Forgot the widows' want, and orphans' cry;
If I have known a good I have not shared,
Nor called the poor to take his portion with me,
Let my worst enemies stand forth and now
Deny the succor which I gave them not.
Glos. Marry, there are, though I believe them not,
Who say you meddle in affairs of state—
That you presume to prattle, like a busybody,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o'th' Council
What fits the order of the common-weal.
J. Sh. Oh, that the busy world at least in this
Would take example from a wretch like me!
None then would waste their hours in foreign thoughts,
Forget themselves and what concerns their peace,
To tread the mazes of fantastic falsehood,
To haunt her idle sounds and flying tales
Through all the giddy, noisy courts of rumor:
Malicious slander never would have leisure
To search with prying eyes for faults abroad,
If all, like me, considered their own hearts,
And wept the sorrows which they found at home.
Glos. Go to! I know your power, and though I trust not
To every breath of fame, I'm not to learn
That Hastings is professed your loving vassal.
But fair befall your beauty; use it wisely,
And may it stand your fortunes much in stead,
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,
And place you high in safety and in honor.
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.
J. Sh. Oh! where or how?—Can my unworthy hand
Become an instrument of good to any?
Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly
To yield obedience to your dread command.
Glos. Why, that's well said.—Thus then; observe me well.
The state, for many high and potent reasons,
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
For the imperial weight of England's crown——
J. Sh. [*aside*]. Alas! for pity.
Glos. Therefore have resolved
To set aside their unavailing infancy,
And vest the sovereign rule in abler hands.
This, though of great importance to the public,
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,
Does stubbornly oppose.
J. Sh. Does he? Does Hastings?
Glos. Aye, Hastings.
J. Sh. Reward him for the noble deed, just heavens!
For this one action guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance;
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame;
Let never-fading honors flourish round him,
And consecrate his name even to time's end;
Let him know nothing else but good on earth,
And everlasting blessedness hereafter.

Glos. How now!
J. Sh. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones!
Shall they be left a prey to savage power?
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to heaven for help and not be heard?
Impossible! O gallant, generous Hastings,
Go on, pursue! Assert the sacred cause.
Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless infants from oppression.
The saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on thy side.
Glos. You're passing rich in this same heavenly speech,
And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me!
My favor is not bought with words like these.
Go to!—you'll teach your tongue another tale.
J. Sh. No, though the royal Edward has undone me,
He was my king, my gracious master still.
He loved me too; though 'twas a guilty flame
And fatal to my peace, yet still he lov'd me:
With fondness, and with tenderness he doted,
Dwelt in my eyes, and lived but in my smiles.
And can I—oh, my heart abhors the thought—
Stand by and see his children robbed of right?
Glos. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me further;
None of your arts, your feigning, and your foolery,
Your dainty, squeamish coying-it, to me!
Go—to your lord, your paramour. Be gone!
Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
And play your monkey gambols over to him.
You know my purpose; look that you pursue it,
And make him yield obedience to my will.
Do it—or woe upon thy harlot's head!
J. Sh. Oh, that my tongue had ev'ry grace of speech,
Great and commanding as the breath of kings,
Sweet as the poet's numbers, and prevailing
As soft persuasion to a love-sick maid;
That I had art and eloquence divine
To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
And plead till death the cause of injured innocence!
Glos. Ha! dost thou brave me, minion? Dost thou know
How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can make thee?
That I can let loose fear, distress, and famine,
To hunt thy heels like hell-hounds through the world?
That I can place thee in such abject state
As help shall never find thee—where repining
Thou shalt sit down and gnaw the earth for anguish,
Groan to the pitiless winds without return,
Howl like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
And curse thy life in bitterness of misery?
J. Sh. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
Turned forth and driven to wander like a vagabond;
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
Upon the barren, wild, and desolate waste,
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
Ere I consent to teach my lips injustice,
Or wrong the orphan who has none to save him.
Gos. 'Tis well—we'll try the temper of your heart.
What ho! Who waits without?

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, *and Attendants.*

Ratc. Your highness's pleasure.—
Glos. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet forth!
Spurn her into the street; there let her perish
And rot upon a dunghill. Through the city
See it proclaimed that none, on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbor.
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
The purchase of her loose, luxurious life,
We seize on, for the profit of the state.
—Away! Be gone!
J. Sh. O thou most righteous judge——
Humbly, behold, I bow myself to thee,
And own thy justice in this hard decree:
No longer then my ripe offences spare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive;
No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.
[*Exit* JANE SHORE *guarded by* CATESBY *and others.*
Glos. So much for this. [*To* RATCLIFFE. Your project's at an end
This idle toy, this hilding, scorns my power
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call——
Ratc. The Council waits
Upon your highness's leisure.—
Glos. Bid 'em enter.

Enter the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, EARL OF DERBY, BISHOP OF ELY, LORD HASTINGS

and others, as to the Council. The DUKE OF GLOSTER *takes his place at the upper end; then the rest sit.*

Derby. In happy time are we assembled here,
To point the day and fix the solemn pomp
For placing England's crown with all due rites
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow.
Hast. Some busy, meddling knaves 'tis said there are,
As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right.
Therefore I hold it fitting, with the soonest
T'appoint the order of the coronation;
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.
Derby [*to* GLOSTER]. We all attend to know your highness's pleasure
Glos. My lords! a set of worthy men you are,
Prudent and just, and careful for the state.
Therefore, to your most grave determination,
I yield myself in all things, and demand
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T'inflict upon those damnable contrivers
Who shall with potions, charms, and witching drugs,
Practice against our person and our life.
Hast. So much I hold the king your highness's debtor,
So precious are you to the common-weal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.
Glos. Then judge yourselves; convince your eyes of truth. [*Pulling up his sleeve.*
Behold my arm thus blasted, dry and withered;
Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decayed,
Like some untimely product of the seasons;
Robbed of its properties of strength and office.
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
Who in conjunction with that harlot Shore
And other like confederate midnight hags,
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
And conjurations horrible to hear,
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
And set the ministers of hell at work
To torture and despoil me of my life.
Hast. If they have done this deed——
Glos. If they have done it!
Talk'st thou to me of if's, audacious traitor?
Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
The patron and complotter of her mischiefs,
And joined in this contrivance for my death.
Nay, start not, lords.—What ho! a guard there, sirs!

Enter Guard.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason!
Seize him, and bear him instantly away;
He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul!
I will not dine before his head be brought me!
Ratcliffe, stay you and see that it be done.
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[*Exeunt* GLOSTER *and Lords following. Manent* LORD HASTINGS, RATCLIFFE, *and Guard.*

Hast. What! and no more but this—how? to the scaffold!
O gentle Ratcliffe, tell me; do I hold thee?
Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
To break, to struggle through this dread confusion?
For surely death itself is not so painful
As is this sudden horror and surprise.
Ratc. You heard; the duke's commands to me were absolute.
Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift
With all good speed you may. Summon your courage,
And be yourself; for you must die this instant.
Hast. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly counsel,
And die as a man should. 'Tis somewhat hard
To call my scattered spirits home at once;
But since what must be, must be—let necessity
Supply the place of time and preparation,
And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die;
'Tis but to venture on that common hazard
Which many a time in battle I have run;
'Tis but to do what, at that very moment,
In many nations of the peopled earth,
A thousand and a thousand shall do with me;
'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out daylight—
To view no more the wicked ways of men,
No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,
And be a weeping witness of the woes,
The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Stand off! and let me pass—I will, I must
Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
And hold him to my heart.—O Hastings, Hastings!
Hast. Alas! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment,
To fill me with new terrors, new distractions,

To turn me wild with thy distempered rage,
And shock the peace of my departing soul?
Away! I prithee, leave me!
Alic. Stop a minute—
Till my full griefs find passage. Oh, the tyrant!
Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.
Hast. What means thy frantic grief?
Alic. I cannot speak—
But I have murdered thee.—Oh, I would tell thee!
Hast. Speak, and give ease to thy conflicting passions.
Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense;
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
Break in at once. This way and that they snatch,
They tear my hurried soul. All claim attention,
And yet not one is heard. Oh, speak and leave me,
For I have business would employ an age,
And but a minute's time to get it done in.
Alic. That, that's my grief—'tis I that urge thee on,
Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
And drive thee down this precipice of fate.
Hast. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak hand
Bring on this mighty ruin? If it could,
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
That nothing but my life can make atonement?
Alic. Thy cruel scorn had stung me to the heart,
And set my burning bosom all in flames.
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
And writ I know not what—told the Protector,
That Shore's detested wife by wiles had won thee
To plot against his greatness.—He believed it,
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel!)
And while I meant destruction on her head,
H' has turned it all on thine.
Hast. Accursed Jealousy!
O merciless, wild, unforgiving fiend!
Blindfold it runs to undistinguished mischief,
And murders all it meets. Cursed be its rage,
For there is none so deadly; doubly cursed
Be all those easy fools who give it harbor,
Who turn a monster loose among mankind,
Fiercer than famine, war, or spotted pestilence,
Baneful as death and horrible as hell.
Alic. If thou wilt curse, curse rather thine own falsehood;
Curse the lewd maxims of thy prejured sex,
Which taught thee first to laugh at faith and justice,
To scorn the solemn sanctity of oaths,
And make a jest of a poor woman's ruin;
Curse thy proud heart, and thy insulting tongue,
That raised this fatal fury in my soul
And urged my vengeance to undo us both.
Hast. Oh, thou inhuman! turn thy eyes away.
And blast me not with their destructive beams.
Why should I curse thee with my dying breath?
Be gone! and let me sigh it out in peace.
Alic. Canst thou—O cruel Hastings—leave me thus?
Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me!
While with an agonizing heart, I swear
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
The terrors, and despair thy loss shall give me,
My hate was on my rival bent alone.
Oh! had I once divined, false as thou art,
A danger to thy life, I would have died,
I would have met it for thee, and made bare
My ready, faithful breast to save thee from it.
Hast. Now mark! and tremble at Heaven's just award.
While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge
Pursued the innocence which never wronged thee,
Behold! the mischief falls on thee and me.
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
And everlasting anguish be thy portion;
For me the snares of death are wound about me,
And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
Oh, if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knee,
And recommend my parting soul to mercy!
Alic. [*kneeling*]. Oh, yet, before I go forever from thee,
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me,
And in compassion of my strong affliction,
Say, is it possible you can forgive
The fatal rashness of ungoverned love?
For oh, 'tis certain, if I had not loved thee
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
Desired to death, and doted to distraction,
This day of horror never should have known us.
Hast. [*raising her*]. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sorrows!
Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more—
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
I see the hand of Heav'n is armed against me,

And, in mysterious providence, decrees
To punish me by thy mistaking hand.
Most righteous doom! for, oh, while I behold thee,
Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
And charge thy ruin on me—thy fair fame,
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
Dishonored, blasted, and betrayed by me!
Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing?
Oh, that inhuman Gloster could be moved
But half so easily as I can pardon!
Hast. Here, then, exchange we mutually forgiveness.
So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
As here I part without one angry thought;
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
And begging Heav'n to bless and to support thee.
Ratc. My lord, dispatch; the duke has sent to chide me
For loitering in my duty.—
Hast. I obey.
Alic. Insatiate, savage monster! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
Thou great avenger; give him blood for blood!
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings blast him!
Some horrid, cursèd kind of death o'ertake him,
Sudden, and in the fullness of his sins!
That he may know how terrible it is
To want that moment he denies thee now.
Hast. 'Tis all in vain, this rage that tears thy bosom;
Like a poor bird that flutters in its cage,
Thou beat'st thyself to death. Retire, I beg thee;
To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds me;
Thy agonies are added to my own,
And make the burden more than I can bear.
Farewell—Good angels visit thy afflictions
And bring thee peace and comfort from above.
Alic. Oh, stab me to the heart; some pitying hand
Now strike me dead!
Hast. One thing I had forgot—
I charge thee by our present common miseries,
By our past loves, if yet they have a name,
By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter—
Let not the rancor of thy hate pursue
The innocence of thy unhappy friend.
Thou know'st who 'tis I mean; oh, shouldst thou wrong her,
Just Heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,
And make 'em know no end.—Remember this
As the last warning of a dying man.
Farewell forever!

[*The Guards carry* HASTINGS *off.*

Alic. Forever! Oh, forever!
Oh, who can bear to be a wretch forever!
My rival too! His last thoughts hung on her,
And, as he parted, left a blessing for her.
Shall she be blest, and I be cursed, forever?
No! Since her fatal beauty was the cause
Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains;
Let her, like me of ev'ry joy forlorn,
Devote the hour when such a wretch was born:
Like me to deserts and to darkness run,
Abhor the day, and curse the golden sun;
Cast ev'ry good, and ev'ry hope behind;
Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind;
Like me, with cries distracted fill the air,
Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
And prove the torments of the last despair.

[*Exit.*

ACT V

SCENE I

The Street.

Enter BELLMOUR *and* DUMONT, *or* SHORE.

Shore. You saw her then?
Bell. I met her, as returning
In solemn penance from the public cross.
Before her, certain rascal officers,
Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
Proclaimed the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
On either side her marched an ill-looked priest,
Who with severe, with horrid, haggard eyes,
Did ever and anon by turns upbraid her,
And thunder in her trembling ear damnation.
Around her, numberless the rabble flowed,
Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
Some pitying, but those, alas! how few!
The most—such iron hearts we are, and such
The base barbarity of human kind—
With insolence and lewd reproach pursued her,
Hooting and railing, and with villainous hands
Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
To hurl upon her head.
Shore. Inhuman dogs!
How did she bear it?

Bell. With the gentlest patience.
Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders, carelessly confused,
With loose neglect her lovely tresses hung;
Upon her cheek a faintish flush was spread;
Feeble she seemed, and sorely smit with pain,
While bare-foot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were marked with blood.
Yet silent still she passed and unrepining;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow
To Heav'n she seemed in fervent zeal to raise,
And beg that mercy man denied her here.
Shore. When was this piteous sight?
Bell. These last two days.
You know my care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy means of your deliverance,
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gained.
During that time, although I have not seen her,
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
To wait about and watch a fit convenience
To give her some relief; but all in vain.
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
Who menace those with death that bring her comfort
And drive all succor from her.
Shore. Let 'em threaten.
Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;
So Heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow
To give her help and share one fortune with her.
Bell. Mean you to see her thus, in your own form?
Shore. I do.
Bell. And have you thought upon the consequence?
Shore. What is there I should fear?
Bell. Have you examined
Into your inmost heart, and tried at leisure
The several secret springs that move the passions?
Has Mercy fixed her empire there so sure,
That Wrath and Vengeance never may return?
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce Resentment, sleep?
Shore. Why dost thou search so deep, and urge my memory
To conjure up my wrongs to life again?
I have long labored to forget myself,
To think on all time, backward, like a space
Idle and void, where nothing e'er had being.
But thou hast peopled it again; Revenge
And Jealousy renew their horrid forms,
Shoot all their fires, and drive me to distraction.
Bell. Far be the thought from me! my care was only
To arm you for the meeting. Better were it
Never to see her than to let that name
Recall forgotten rage, and make the husband
Destroy the generous pity of Dumont.
Shore. Oh! thou hast set my busy brain at work,
And now she musters up a train of images
Which to preserve my peace I had cast aside
And sunk in deep oblivion—Oh, that form!
That angel-face on which my dotage hung!
How I have gazed upon her, till my soul
With very eagerness went forth towards her,
And issued at my eyes.—Was there a gem
Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields,
What was there art could make, or wealth could buy,
Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?
What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.
Bell. Away with that sad fancy.—
Shore. Oh, that day!
The thought of it must live forever with me.
I met her, Bellmour, when the royal spoiler
Bore her in triumph from my widowed home!
Within his chariot by his side she sate
And listened to his talk with downward looks;
Till sudden, as she chanced aside to glance,
Her eyes encountered mine. Oh, then, my friend!
Oh, who can paint my grief and her amazement!
As at the stroke of death, twice turned she pale,
And twice a burning crimson blushed all o'er her;
Then, with a shriek heart-wounding, loud she cried,
While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung.
Moved at her grief, the tyrant ravisher
With courteous action wooed her oft to turn;
Earnest he seemed to plead, but all in vain;
Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,
And followed me—till I had lost myself.
Bell. Alas, for pity! Oh, those speaking tears!
Could they be false? Did she not suffer with you?
For though the king by force possessed her person,
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you.
If all her former woes were not enough,
Look on her now; behold her where she wanders,

Hunted to death, distressed on every side,
With no one hand to help; and tell me, then,
If ever misery were known like hers.
Shore. And can she bear it? Can that delicate frame
Endure the beating of a storm so rude?
Can she, for whom the various seasons changed
To court her appetite and crown her board,
For whom the foreign vintages were pressed,
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
Can she—
Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
To wrap her shivering bosom from the weather?
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her.
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring
Too rough to breathe upon her. Cheerfulness
Danced all the day before her, and at night
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow.
Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps, she lies
Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
It is too much.—Hence with her past offences;
They are atoned at full. Why stay we then?
Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.
Bell. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor, abandoned creature lingers.
Her guard, though set with strictest watch to keep
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.
Shore. Here then let us divide, each in his round
To search her sorrows out. Whose hap it is
First to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Jane Shore, *her hair hanging loose on her shoulders, and bare-footed.*

J. Sh. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, oh, my soul!
For are not thy transgressions great and numberless?
Do they not cover thee, like rising floods,
And press thee like a weight of waters down?
Does not the hand of righteousness afflict thee;
And who shall plead against it? Who shall say
To Pow'r Almighty, "Thou hast done enough":
Or bid his dreadful rod of vengeance stay?
Wait then with patience till the circling hours
Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest
And lay thee down in death. The hireling thus
With labor drudges out the painful day,
And often looks with long expecting eyes
To see the shadows rise and be dismissed.
And hark! methinks the roar that late pursued me
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
And softens into silence. Does revenge
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?
My guard, too, that observed me still so close,
Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
And loiter far behind? Alas, I faint;
My spirits fail at once.—This is the door
Of my Alicia—blessed opportunity!
I'll steal a little succor from her goodness,
Now, while no eye observes me.
[*She knocks at the door.*

Enter a Servant.

Is your lady—
My gentle friend, at home? Oh, bring me to her. [*Going in.*
Serv. [*putting her back*]. Hold, mistress, whither would you?
J. Sh. Do you not know me?
Serv. I know you well, and know my orders too.
You must not enter here.
J. Sh. Tell my Alicia,
'Tis I would see her.
Serv. She is ill at ease
And will admit no visitor.
J. Sh. But tell her
'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg——
Serv. 'Tis all in vain——
Go hence, and howl to those that will regard you. [*Shuts the door and exit.*
J. Sh. It was not always thus; the time has been
When this unfriendly door that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leaped from off its hinges
To give me entrance here; when this good house
Has poured forth all its dwellers to receive me;
When my approach has made a little holyday,
And ev'ry face was dressed in smiles to meet me.

But now 'tis otherwise, and those who blessed me
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander—
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here!
[*She sits down at the door.*

Enter Alicia *in disorder, two Servants following.*

Alic. What wretch art thou whose misery and baseness
Hangs on my door; whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry?
J. Sh. A very beggar, and a wretch indeed;
One driv'n by strong calamity to seek
For succor here; one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days;
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.
Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread?
I know thee not.—Go, hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scattered it,
Or cast it on the waters.—Mark the eagle
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them—I know thee not.
J. Sh. And yet there was a time when my Alicia
Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing,
And mourned that live-long day she passed without me;
When, paired like turtles, we were still together;
When often as we prattled arm in arm,
Inclining fondly to me, she has sworn
She loved me more than all the world beside.
Alic. Ha! say'st thou!—let me look upon thee well——
'Tis true—I know thee now—A mischief on thee!—
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursèd she,
That set my brain a madding. Thou hast robbed me;
Thou hast undone me.—Murder! Oh, my Hastings!
See, his pale, bloody head shoots glaring by me!
Give him me back again, thou soft deluder,
Thou beauteous witch——
J. Sh. Alas, I never wronged you!
Oh, then be good to me; have pity on me!
Thou never knew'st the bitterness of want,
And may'st thou never know it. Oh, bestow
Some poor remain, the voiding of thy table,
A morsel to support my famished soul.
Alic. Avaunt! and come not near me——
J. Sh. To thy hand
I trusted all—gave my whole store to thee.
Nor do I ask it back; allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.
Alic. Nay, tell not me! Where is thy king, thy Edward,
And all the smiling, cringing train of courtiers
That bent the knee before thee?
J. Sh. Oh, for mercy!
Alic. Mercy? I know it not—for I am miserable.
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells.
This is her house, where the sun never dawns;
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark! something cracks above!—It shakes, it totters!
And see, the nodding ruin falls to crush me!
—'Tis fall'n, 'tis here! I feel it on my brain!
1st Serv. This sight disorders her——
2nd Serv. Retire, dear lady——
And leave this woman——
Alic. Let her take my counsel!
Why shouldst thou be a wretch? Stab, tear thy heart,
And rid thyself of this detested being;
I wo'not linger long behind thee here.
A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me;
And now 'tis out, and I am drowned in blood.
—Ha! what art thou, thou horrid headless trunk?
It is my Hastings!—See, he wafts me on!
Away! I go! I fly! I follow thee.
—But come not thou with mischief-making beauty
To interpose between us; look not on him;
Give thy fond arts and thy delusions o'er,
For thou shalt never, never part us more.
[*She runs off, her Servants following.*
J. Sh. Alas! she raves; her brain, I fear, is turned.
In mercy look upon her, gracious Heaven,
Nor visit her for any wrong to me.
Sure, I am near upon my journey's end;
My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,
And dancing shadows swim before my sight.
I can no more. [*Lies down*] Receive me, thou cold Earth;
Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
And let me rest with thee.

Enter Bellmour.

Bell. Upon the ground!
Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.
—Look up, thou poor afflicted one—thou mourner,
Whom none has comforted! Where are thy friends,
The dear companions of thy joyful days,
Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,
And bind thee to their bosoms? Thus with thee,
Thus let us live, and let us die, they said,
For sure thou art the sister of our loves,
And nothing shall divide us.—Now where are they?
J. Sh. Ah! Bellmour, where indeed! they stand aloof,
And view my desolation from a-far;
When they pass by, they shake their heads in scorn
And cry, "Behold the harlot and her end!"
And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me!
—Alas! there may be danger; get thee gone!
Let me not pull a ruin on thy head!
Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n
Never to rise, and all relief is vain.
Bell. Yet raise thy drooping head, for I am come
To chase away despair. Behold, where yonder
That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
Is hasting to thy aid!—
J. Sh. [*raising herself and looking about*]—Dumont? Ha! where?
Then Heav'n has heard my pray'r; his very name
Renews the springs of life and cheers my soul.
Has he then 'scaped the snare?
Bell. He has, but see——
He comes, unlike to that Dumont you knew,
For now he wears your better angel's form,
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE.

J. Sh. Speak—tell me! Which is he? And oh! what would
This dreadful vision! See, it comes upon me——
It is my husband—Ah! [*She swoons.*
Shore. She faints! Support her;
Sustain her head while I infuse this cordial
Into her dying lips—from spicy drugs,
Rich herbs, and flow'rs the potent juice is drawn;
With wondrous force it strikes the lazy spirits,
Drives 'em around, and wakens life anew.
Bell. Her weakness could not bear the strong surprise.
—But see, she stirs! and the returning blood
Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle
Upon her ashy cheek——
Shore [*raising her up*]. So,—gently raise her——
J. Sh. Ha, what art thou?—Bellmour!
Bell. How fare you, lady?
J. Sh. My heart is thrilled with horror——
Bell. Be of courage——
Your husband lives! 'Tis he, my worthiest friend——
J. Sh. Still art thou there?—still dost thou hover round me?
Oh, save me, Bellmour, from his angry shade!
Bell. 'Tis he himself!—he lives!—look up——
J. Sh. I dare not!
Oh, that my eyes could shut him out forever——
Shore. Am I so hateful then, so deadly to thee,
To blast thy eyes with horror? Since I'm grown
A burthen to the world, myself, and thee,
Would I had ne'er survived to see thee more.
J. Sh. Oh, thou most injured!—Dost thou live, indeed?
Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head;
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns;
Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O Night,
And shield me with thy sable wing forever!
Sh. Why dost thou turn away?—why tremble thus?
Why thus indulge thy fears, and in despair,
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.
My arms, my heart are open to receive thee,
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home
With tender joy, with fond, forgiving love,
And all the longings of my first desires.
J. Sh. No, arm thy brow with vengeance, and appear
The minister of Heav'n's enquiring justice;
Array thyself all terrible for judgment,
Wrath in thy eyes, and thunder in thy voice;
Pronounce my sentence, and if yet there be
A woe I have not felt, inflict it on me.
Shore. The measure of thy sorrows is complete,
And I am come to snatch thee from injustice.
The hand of pow'r no more shall crush thy weakness,
Nor proud oppression grind thy humble soul.
J. Sh. Art thou not risen by miracle from death?
Thy shroud is fall'n from off thee, and the grave

Was bid to give thee up, that thou might'st come
The messenger of grace and goodness to me,
To seal my peace and bless me ere I go.
Oh, let me then fall down beneath thy feet
And weep my gratitude forever there;
Give me your drops, ye soft-descending rains,
Give me your streams, ye never ceasing springs,
That my sad eyes may still supply my duty,
And feed an everlasting flood of sorrow.
Shore. Waste not thy feeble spirits. I have long
Beheld, unknown, thy mourning and repentance;
Therefore my heart has set aside the past,
And holds thee white as unoffending innocence;
Therefore, in spite of cruel Gloster's rage,
Soon as my friend had broke my prison doors,
I flew to thy assistance. Let us haste
Now, while occasion seems to smile upon us,
Forsake this place of shame and find a shelter.
J. Sh. What shall I say to you? But I obey——
Shore. Lean on my arm——
J. Sh. Alas! I am wondrous faint:
But that's not strange; I have not eat these three days.
Shore. Oh, merciless! Look here, my love, I've brought thee
Some rich conserves.—
J. Sh. How can you be so good?
But you were ever thus; I well remember
With what fond care, what diligence of love,
You lavished out your wealth to buy me pleasures,
Preventing every wish. Have you forgot
The costly string of pearl you brought me home
And tied about my neck?—How could I leave you?
Shore. Taste some of this, or this——
J. Sh. You're strangely altered——
Say, gentle Bellmour, is he not? How pale
Your visage is become! Your eyes are hollow;
Nay, you are wrinkled too.—Alas the day!
My wretchedness has cost you many a tear
And many a bitter pang since last we parted.
Shore. No more of that—thou talk'st but dost not eat.
J. Sh. My feeble jaws forget their common office,
My tasteless tongue cleaves to the clammy roof,
And now a gen'ral loathing grows upon me.—
Oh, I am sick at heart!— [*She faints.*
Shore. Thou murd'rous sorrow!
Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?
Must she then die? Oh, my poor penitent,
Speak peace to thy sad heart. She hears me not;
Grief masters ev'ry sense.—Help me to hold her——

Enter Catesby, *with a Guard.*

Cate. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state.
[*Guard lays hold on* Shore *and* Bellmour.
Bell. What means this violence?
Cate. Have we not found you,
In scorn of the Protector's strict command,
Assisting this base woman and abetting
Her infamy?
Shore. Infamy on thy head!
Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!
I tell thee, knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,
And she that bore thee was an Ethiop to her!
Cate. You'll answer this at full.—Away with 'em.
Shore. Is charity grown treason to your court?
What honest man would live beneath such rulers?
I am content that we shall die together.—
Cate. Convey the men to prison; but for her,
Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.
J. Sh. [*reviving*]. I will not part with him!
—For me—for me!
Oh, must he die for me?
[*Following him as he is carried off. She falls.*
Shore. Inhuman villains!
[*Breaks from the Guard.*
Stand off! the agonies of death are on her——
She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.
J. Sh. Was this blow wanting to complete my ruin?
Oh, let him go, ye ministers of terror;
He shall offend no more, for I will die
And yield obedience to your cruel master.
Tarry a little, but a little longer,
And take my last breath with you.
Shore. O my love!—
Why have I lived to see this bitter moment,
This grief by far surpassing all my former!
Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me
With such an earnest, such a piteous look,
As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning
Thou couldst not speak!—
J. Sh. Forgive me!—but forgive me!
Shore. Be witness for me, ye celestial host,
Such mercy and such pardon as my soul
Accords to thee, and begs of Heav'n to show thee,

May such befall me at my latest hour,
And make my portion blest or cursed forever.
J. Sh. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace.
'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now.
—Was there not something I would have bequeathed you?
But I have nothing left me to bestow——
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh, mercy, Heav'n! [*Dies.*
Bell. There fled the soul,
And left her load of misery behind.
Shore. Oh, my heart's treasure! Is this pale, sad visage
All that remains of thee? Are these dead eyes
The light that cheer my soul? Oh, heavy hour!
But I will fix my trembling lips to thine
Till I am cold and senseless quite, as thou art.
What, must we part then?—
[*To the Guards taking him away.*
—Will you——
[*Kissing her.*
Fare thee well!
—Now execute your tyrant's will, and lead me
To bonds or death; 'tis equally indifferent.
Bell. Let those who view this sad example know
What fate attends the broken marriage vow;
And teach their children in succeeding times,
No common vengeance waits upon these crimes,
When such severe repentance could not save,
From want, from shame, and an untimely grave. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MRS. OLDFIELD

Ye modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,
Who lead with horrid husbands decent lives,
You who for all you are in such a taking
To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,
Yet make a conscience still of cuckold-making,
What can we say your pardon to obtain?
This matter here was proved against poor Jane:
She never once denied it, but in short,
Whimpered,—and cried, "Sweet sir,—I'm sorry for't."
'Twas well she met a kind, good-natured soul,
We are not all so easy to control.
I fancy one might find in this good town
Some would ha' told the gentleman his own;
Have answered smart, "To what do you pretend,
Blockhead?—As if I mustn't see a friend!
Tell me of hackney-coaches—jaunts to th' City—
Where should I buy my china?—Faith, I'll fit ye!—"
Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit:
You!—lords and masters!—was not that some merit?
Don't you allow it to be virtuous bearing,
When we submit thus to your domineering?
Well, peace be with her; she did wrong most surely,
But so do many more who look demurely:
Nor should our mourning madam weep alone,
There are more ways of wickedness than one.
If the reforming stage should fall to shaming
Ill-nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming,
The poets frequently might move compassion,
And with she-tragedies o'er-run the nation.
Then judge the fair offender, with good nature;
And let your fellow-feeling curb your satire.
What if our neighbors have some little failing,
Must we needs fall to damning and to railing?
For her excuse too, be it understood,
That if the woman was not quite so good,
Her lover was a king; she, flesh and blood.
And since she has dearly paid the sinful score,
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.

RICHARD STEELE

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS

Richard Steele, like Farquhar, Goldsmith, and Sheridan, was born in Ireland and like them had that charm which in one manifestation or other is generally associated with the Irish character. Whether he is regarded in his personal relations with Addison and Cibber, and, best of all, with "dear Prue," or in his varied activities as tract-writer, dramatist, essayist, and Member of Parliament, or in his chronic plight as defendant in lawsuits for debt, he always commands our sympathy and wins our love. He is also none the less endeared to us because, while constantly and sincerely working for reform in English manners and morals in literature and life, he fell largely because of good fellowship and improvidence into many of the errors he condemned. His "dear ruler," his creditors, and his own conscience speedily lifted him up to the standard he had in open profession set for himself; today our charity covers a multitude of his sins.

Born in Dublin in 1672 and left an orphan about five years later, Steele was cared for by his uncle, Henry Gascoigne, through whose influence he was admitted to the Charterhouse in 1684. Here began two years later that friendship with Addison which was continued in Oxford and which lasted till the unhappy break only two months before Addison's death. It is characteristic of the two men that the proper and somewhat conventional Addison should obtain both degrees and proceed to a fellowship and that the erratic Steele should leave the university without a degree and enlist in the Duke of Ormond's guards (1694). From now on his life was full and varied. His loyal poem on the death of Queen Mary, *The Procession* (1695), won him an ensign's commission, and by 1700 he had been promoted to a captaincy. While in the army he furnished his first public record of the difficulty he always found in living up to his religious ideals. The struggle was particularly hard in the midst of his military associates, as was shown when much against his principles he fought a duel. Accordingly, in order to strengthen himself and others in godly living, he wrote *The Christian Hero* (1701), in which he showed that help comes not from the classical philosophers and heroes, but from Christ and St. Paul, who taught that "the true guide in conduct is conscience" (Routh). Whatever spiritual benefit

Steele may have received from this pamphlet was immediately if not completely balanced by the realization "that from being thought no undelightful companion, he was reckoned a disagreeable fellow."

Partly, therefore, "to enliven his character" in the eyes of his scoffing fellows and partly to help in the reform of the stage, he wrote his first comedy, *The Funeral or Grief à la Mode* (1701), which won what Cibber called a "more than expected success." It was one of the earliest plays to show the influence for good that the aroused Puritan conscience of England had effected, especially as voiced in the grating tones of Jeremy Collier's *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage* (1698). This famous treatise was not so much the cause of the reform as the sign that the people were disgusted with the licentious Restoration comedy. It was a sign, too, which the erring dramatists heeded, so that Colley Cibber justly said that Collier's "calling our Dramatick Writers to this strict Account had a very wholesome Effect upon those who writ after this time. They were now a great deal more upon their Guard; Indecencies were no longer Wit; and by degrees the Fair Sex came again to fill the Boxes on the first Day of a new Comedy without Fear or Censure." Cibber had already, two years before the appearance of Collier's counterblast, shown his practical rather than any distinctly moral sense by trimming his sails to the veering wind when he wrote *Love's Last Shift* (1696). In this play he reached towards the new without parting company with the old comedy, for he devoted four acts in appealing to the "coarse palates" of the gallants and the fifth in bringing about the very doubtful reformation of the "honest rake." Vanbrugh's sequel, *The Relapse* (1697), shows with what little seriousness this reformation was taken. Steele, however, was actuated by higher motives and his first play was not marred by pinchbeck morality. He is continuing in the theatre the reform he began in his tract, though, of course, the tone is not so serious. He keeps to the province of the Wycherley and Congreve comedy, that of the domestic relations, but his purpose is entirely different. The blind husband sees the iniquity of his wife, who is duly punished, the victims of her villainy are restored to their rights, and virtue is triumphant. The deceived husband is no longer an object of profane mirth and the sinners are not treated as fine fellows. The comic material, as throughout in Steele's comedies, is supplied by the subordinate characters, who furnish amusing satire such as Steele gave forth abundantly in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. So we have the ridiculous funeral director and his mutes, who persist in looking cheerful though hired to be dismal; the pettifogging lawyer's clerk, and the raw recruits, fit companions for Falstaff's ragged regiment.

Having succeeded in making, as he said, "Virtue and Vice appear just as they ought to be," Steele proceeded two years later to "write a comedy in the severity [Collier] required." This was *The Lying Lover or The Ladies' Friendship* (1703). Using Corneille's *Le Menteur* as a basis, Steele

inserted a scene to convey the lesson he would teach by showing the remorse which follows murder committed in drunkenness. Of this scene he says: "The anguish [Young Bookwit] there expresses and the mutual sorrow between an only child and a tender father in that distress, are, perhaps, an injury to the rules of comedy, but I am sure they are a justice to those of morality." Here is the first unmistakable evidence of the new sentimental comedy, if not in English drama, at any rate in Steele. The straining after the pathetic, as in the remorse of the son and the anguish of the father, is a mark of what was replacing the abhorred wit of the Restoration period. There was, too, much less genuine fun in this play than in the first; certain minor characters are only moderately amusing. We are not surprised to learn that the play, as Steele admits, was "damned for its piety."

In the interval between Steele's second and third plays, Cibber produced *The Careless Husband* (1704), which shows the progress both in moral reform and in sentimentalism in the drama. The moral tone is finer than in *Love's Last Shift,* and the reformation is felt to be permanent. The sentimental interest is plainly shown in the pathetic situations, as when the noble wife refuses to listen to evidence of her husband's wrongdoing, and to reproach him for infidelity even upon her own discovery of it, but receives him bitterly repentant of his sins. Steele's last play of this period, *The Tender Husband or The Accomplished Fools* (1705), violates all dramatic propriety for the sake of the sentimental effect. A man employs his mistress in the disguise of a gallant to test his wife's virtue; the experiment is succeeding all too well for the man's peace of mind when he indignantly bursts from concealment; after a vain attempt at bravado the wife faints, implores forgiveness, and is received into the tender husband's arms. Poetic justice has become gushing sentimentality and a mock is made of genuine morality. Much healthier and more in keeping with dramatic propriety are the comic scenes, which have also a moral purpose after the fashion of Steele's later journalistic satire. They deal with the relations of parents to children and depict the wholly admirable Biddy Tipkin, who, with her head crammed with French romances, will be wooed only by a lover as valiant and fine as Oroondates so that there is no doing anything with her, and the equally amusing Humphry Gubbin, who breaks from his father's tyranny and marries to suit himself. Humphry harks back to Ben in Congreve's *Love for Love* and looks forward to Goldsmith's Tony Lumpkin; his father is of the same type as Fielding's Squire Western.

The Tender Husband was not a financial success, and Steele had to turn to other occupations to keep the bailiff from the door. Two appointments, one as Gentleman Waiter to Prince George of Denmark at £100 a year (1706), the other as Gazetteer at £300 a year with a tax of £45 (1707), did not furnish enough for one of his mercurial disposition. His first marriage in 1705 and his second to Mistress Mary Scurlock in 1707 brought him a nominally large but not always a collectable

income. The pressure of debt and his inventive genius led to his founding *The Tatler, The Spectator,* and their successors.

In these papers Steele reached a greater public than he did in the theatre, and even in the reform of the drama his essays had more weight than his plays. Cibber testified in his Preface to *Ximena* (1719): "How often have we known the most excellent audience drawn together at a day's warning, by the influence or warrant of a single *Tatler,* in a season when our best endeavors without it could not defray the charge of the performance!" It was particularly in his essays on the domestic relations that he was a civilizing force, as he had also tried to be in his plays. His delightful letters to "dear Prue," so charming in their naïveté, in their revelation of the man's foibles and failings and above all of his surpassing goodness of heart testify to his perfect sincerity and sympathy. This sympathy at times runs into "lachrymose sensibility" and becomes part of the sentimentality which was already developing in the comedies and which was to find full expression in his last play.

His journalistic work led him into politics, which influenced *The Guardian* (1713) and dominated *The Englishman* (1713). He was elected to Parliament (1713), expelled within a year for seditious articles, and re-elected and knighted in 1715. He was brought again into closer touch with the theatre by being made supervisor of Drury Lane Theatre (1715), a connection which he held with only slight interruptions till his death in retirement in 1729.

There are references to *The Conscious Lovers,* Steele's last complete play, as early as 1720. The first title announced was *The Unfashionable Lovers,* or, as others said, *The Fine Gentleman.* When it was acted on November 7, 1722, Mrs. Oldfield, Mrs. Younger, Booth, Wilks, and Cibber were in the cast: and to its being in "every part excellently performed" Steele ascribed its "universal acceptance." It had the unusual run of eighteen consecutive nights and later in the season of eight more. By this time the sentimental comedy was established in popular favor, and Steele's play is a good specimen of the type. The moral note is struck in the Preface: "Nor do I make any difficulty to acknowledge that the whole was writ for the sake of the scene of the Fourth Act, wherein Mr. Bevil evades the quarrel with his friend, and hope it may have some effect upon the Goths and Vandals that frequent the theatre, or a polite audience may supply their absence." The more general moral purpose is expressed in the Prologue, where Welsted entreats the Britons for aid in reforming the theatre:

> "'Tis yours with breeding to refine the age,
> To chasten wit and moralize the stage."

As Routh has well pointed out, we have in this play a brief exposition of all Steele's "best ideas on life and character,"—the sketch of servants under-

going the corruption of lackeydom; "satire on marriages of convenience, duelling, and the chicanery of the law; and a glance at the opposition between the hereditary gentry and the rising commercial class"; while in Bevil, Jr., we have the portrayal of the ideal young man. There is no hero in Steele's early comedies quite so admirable as this one. His fine sense of honor which forbids his proposing marriage to his beloved because he has not received his father's approval strikes us as quixotic, especially since he has made no effort to secure this approval. The moral obliquities he resorts to in order to remain obedient to his father and faithful to his beloved betray the inherent weakness of honor based on mere sentimentality. He is so anxious to be upright that he bends over backward. On the other hand, we must admire his stand on the matter of duelling, for it is Steele and not merely Bevil that is speaking. It took more courage then to refuse than to fight a duel. All Bevil's noble conduct is, however, charged with sentimentalism that suggests priggishness. Equally sentimental are his speeches: "This charming vision of Mirza! Such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirit for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person." And at the end of this noble soliloquy he resolves on his "honest dissimulation" to deceive his father! And what a flood of sentiment is poured forth in the dialogue between him and Indiana in Act II, as when he says: "If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true task of life, to ease an aching heart; to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore which is superfluous and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket?"

Just as excellent and only less sentimental is the heroine Indiana. She loves but dares not say so; she endures Bevil's silence with the patience of Griselda; his apparent disregard of everything but her physical welfare she accepts with that exalted faith which sees nothing but perfect probity in his conduct. She also submits willingly to be investigated by the potential enemy of her happiness, and almost at his first word breaks into ready tears; she pities herself as "wretched, helpless, friendless," even though Bevil has treated her and her devoted aunt with unexampled kindness; she finally rises to a frenzy of expostulation against Fate which results in her identity being revealed and her woes coming to an end.

The comic business is, as usual, supplied by the minor characters. Tom and Phillis, already faintly sketched in No. 87 of *The Guardian,* are admirable, and they furnish all that remains of the sparkling dialogue of the Restoration comedy. Cimberton is a sort of high-class booby, who corresponds in his sheer vulgarity to Humphry Gubbin of *The Tender Husband.* He is so outrageous as to be really comic. One should not condemn him with the tremendous solemnity of John Dennis, if for no other reason than that he furnishes the opportunity for satirizing the prudery of Mrs. Sealand. The parodying of legal jargon in the mouths of Bramble and Target must have given a melancholy joy to Steele, who was all too familiar with

the sound of it in the court-room. Indeed, these pettifogging lawyers, who recall the clerk in *The Funeral,* are really dragged in for the sake of the satire, for they do not develop the plot.

It is the comic matter that constitutes the main difference between *The Conscious Lovers* and its source, the *Andria* of Terence. Phillis is much developed beyond her shadowy prototype Mysis, and Tom is far more amusing than Davus, who is the conventionally clever servant of Latin comedy. The part of Cimberton and the moderately comic situations in which he moves are wholly original. Other differences are in the averted duel, which is built on an incipient quarrel in Terence; in the accident by which the love affair of the hero is discovered by his father, more simply and reasonably introduced in the Latin than in the English version; in the highly moral relations of the modern hero and heroine, very proper in sentimental comedy; in the scene taken to disclose the identity of the heroine and thereby to bring the play to a happy issue, which is more naturally accomplished by Terence than by Steele. The plot of the Latin play is more compact and the sequence of events more natural; but the English play has livelier action and richer characterization.

John Dennis attacked this comedy with much personal virulence tempered with some just criticism. Fielding with his usual good sense put his finger on the essential weakness of the play, when he made Parson Adams say of it and Addison's tragedy: "I never read of any plays fit for a Christian to read, but *Cato* and *The Conscious Lovers;* and, I must own, in the latter there are some things almost solemn enough for a sermon." To such a pass has the drama arrived in the twenty-two years since *The Way of the World* was published. It was to become worse before Goldsmith and Sheridan rescued it from the thraldom of smug morality and sentimentalism.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS

"Illud genus narrationis, quod in personis positum est, debet habere sermonis festivitatem, animorum dissimilitudinem, gravitatem, lenitatem, spem, metum, suspicionem, desiderium, dissimulationem, misericordiam, rerum varietates, fortunæ commutationem, insperatum incommodum, subitam letitiam, jucundum exitum rerum."[1]—Cicero, Rhetor. ad Herenn. Lib. i.

[1] The kind of narrative which is presented on the stage ought to be marked by gaiety of dialogue, diversity of character, seriousness, tenderness, hope, fear, suspicion, desire, pity, variety of events, changes of fortune, unexpected disaster, sudden joy, and a happy ending.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SIR JOHN BEVIL.
MR. SEALAND.
BEVIL, JUN., *in love with* INDIANA.
MYRTLE, *in love with* LUCINDA.
CIMBERTON, *a Coxcomb.*
HUMPHRY, *an old Servant to* SIR JOHN.
TOM, *Servant to* BEVIL, JUN.
DANIEL, *a Country Boy, Servant to* INDIANA.
MRS. SEALAND, *second Wife to* SEALAND.
ISABELLA, *Sister to* SEALAND.
INDIANA, SEALAND'S *Daughter, by his first Wife.*
LUCINDA, SEALAND'S *Daughter, by his second Wife.*
PHILLIS, *Maid to* LUCINDA.

SCENE.—LONDON.

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I

SIR JOHN BEVIL'S *House.*

Enter SIR JOHN BEVIL *and* HUMPHRY.

Sir J. Bev. Have you ordered that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

Humph. Yes, sir; I believed you had something of moment to say to me.

Sir J. Bev. Let me see, Humphry; I think it is now full forty years since I first took thee to be about myself.

Humph. I thank you, sir, it has been an easy forty years; and I have passed 'em without much sickness, care, or labor.

Sir J. Bev. Thou hast a brave constitution; you are a year or two older than I am, sirrah.

Humph. You have ever been of that mind, sir.

Sir J. Bev. You knave, you know it; I took thee for thy gravity and sobriety, in my wild years.

Humph. Ah, sir! our manners were formed from our different fortunes, not our different age. Wealth gave a loose to your youth, and poverty put a restraint upon mine.

Sir J. Bev. Well, Humphry, you know I have been a kind master to you; I have used you, for the ingenuous nature I observed in you from the beginning, more like an humble friend than a servant.

Humph. I humbly beg you'll be so tender of me as to explain your commands, sir, without any farther preparation.

Sir J. Bev. I'll tell thee, then: In the first place, this wedding of my son's in all probability (shut the door) will never be at all.

Humph. How, sir! not be at all? for what reason is it carried on in appearance?

Sir J. Bev. Honest Humphry, have patience; and I'll tell thee all in order. I have, myself, in some part of my life, lived (indeed) with freedom, but, I hope, without reproach. Now, I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son; therefore, as soon as he grew towards man, I indulged him in living after his own manner. I knew not how, otherwise, to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behavior under restraint and fear? But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never, in the least action, the most distant hint or word, valued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

Humph. No, sir; on the contrary, he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it, before you or any belonging to you. He is as dependent and resigned to your will as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty. You have ever acted like a good and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

Sir J. Bev. Nay, his carriage is so easy to all with whom he converses, that he is never assuming, never prefers himself to others, nor ever is guilty of that rough sincerity which a man is not called to, and certainly disobliges most of his acquaintance; to be short, Humphry, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offered his only daughter, and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him. You may be sure I made no difficulties, the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

Humph. What hinders the proceeding?

Sir J. Bev. Don't interrupt me. You know I was last Thursday at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out. He knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and though it was the mode, in the last age, yet the masquers, you know, followed us as if we had been the most monstrous figures in that whole assembly.

Humph. I remember, indeed, a young man of quality in the habit of a clown, that was particularly troublesome.

Sir J. Bev. Right; he was too much what he seemed to be. You remember how impertinently he followed and teased us, and would know who we were.

Humph. I know he has a mind to come into that particular. [*Aside.*

Sir J. Bev. Ay, he followed us till the gentleman who led the lady in the Indian mantle presented that gay creature to the rustic, and bid him (like Cymon in the fable) grow polite by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone, meaning me. The clown was not reformed, but rudely persisted, and offered to force off my mask; with that, the gentleman, throwing off his own, appeared to be my son, and in his concern for me, tore off that of the nobleman; at this they seized each other; the company called the guards, and in the surprise the lady swooned away; upon which my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady. When raising her in his arms, "Art thou gone," cried he, "for ever?—forbid it, Heaven!" She revives at his known voice, and with the most familiar, though modest, gesture, hangs in safety over his shoulder weeping, but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation; while she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Humph. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. Bev. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzzed about she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea-officer who had served in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her——

Humph. Was what, I suppose, alarmed Mr. Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match?

Sir J. Bev. You are right. He came to me yesterday and said he thought himself disengaged from the bargain; being credibly informed my son was already married, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.

Humph. Well, sir; and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

Sir J. Bev. That's what I wanted to debate with you. I have said nothing to him yet—but look you, Humphry, if there is so much in this amour of his, that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough to be offended; and then by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engaged to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able to take my measures. In the meantime I would have you find out how far that rogue, his man, is let into his secret. He, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me, as to serve his master.

Humph. Why do you think so of him, sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you, at your son's age.

Sir J. Bev. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long; I'll go to my son immediately, and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue, Tom, that I am in earnest.—I'll leave him to you. [*Exit* SIR JOHN BEVIL.

Humph. Well, though this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain is attended with constant mutual uneasiness. I'm sure I have enough to do to be honest, and yet keep well with them both. But they know I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful however. Oh, here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught. Ho! ho! Tom, whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter TOM, *singing.*

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people than you domestic ordinary drudges that do business; we are raised above you. The pleasures of board wages, tavern dinners, and many a clear gain; vails, alas! you never heard or dreamt of.

Humph. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a man of ten thousand a year, though 'tis but as t'other day that I sent for you to town to put you into Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little before I put you to my young master, who is too gentle for training such a rude thing as you were into proper obedience. You then pulled off your hat to everyone you met in the street, like a bashful great awkward cub as you were. But your great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a fop. That's fit for nothing, except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphry, you know my master scorns to strike his servants. You talk as if the world was now just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth; when you went to dinner because it was so much o'clock, when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes in such strange dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

Humph. Why, you wild rogue!

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner till a formal fellow in a black gown said

something over the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Humph. Sirrah, who do you prate after? Despising men of sacred characters! I hope you never heard my good young master talk so like a profligate.

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me, when I first came to town, about being orderly, and the doctrine of wearing shams to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my clothes fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Humph. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons because I supposed at that time your master and you might have dined at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made a good family servant. But the gang you have frequented since at chocolate houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance——

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen, who are well fed, and cut a figure, sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

Humph. Very well, sir, I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it is arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphry, ha! ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why, now, sir, the lackeys are the men of pleasure of the age, the top gamesters; and many a laced coat about town have had their education in our party-colored regiment. We are false lovers; have a taste of music, poetry, billet-doux, dress, politics; ruin damsels; and when we are weary of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters' wigs and linen, and marry fortunes.

Humph. Hey-day!

Tom. Nay, sir, our order is carried up to the highest dignities and distinctions; step but into the Painted Chamber, and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality. Then, again, come down to the Court of Requests, and you see us all laying our broken heads together for the good of the nation; and though we never carry a question nemine contradicente, yet this I can say, with a safe conscience (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same), that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

Humph. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer. I wanted to see you to enquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them; I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day.

Tom. Ay, sir, he knows it, and is dressed as gay as the sun; but, between you and I, my dear, he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dressed I retired, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walked thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet; when he came out he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid, you know——

Humph. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas, and ridottos for the winter, the parks and Belsize for our summer diversions; and "Lard!" says she, "you are so wild, but you have a world of humor."

Humph. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he ordered you?

Tom. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

Humph. Not easily come at? Why, sirrah, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that; her mother, it seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it; and you must know, Mr. Humphry, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

Humph. What dost thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of hers, a stiff, starched philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffered no message nor letter from my master to come near her.

Humph. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish fond soul that can keep nothing from me; one that will deliver this letter too, if she is rightly managed.

Humph. What! her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

Tom. Even she, sir; this is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to your housekeeper, forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at——

Humph. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature; you must know, I love to fret and play with the little wanton.

Humph. Play with the little wanton! What will this world come to!

Tom. I met her this morning in a new manteau and petticoat, not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing; and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes—then she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at

their house; and is, indeed, the whole town of coquets at second-hand. But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Humph. Then I hope, dear sir, when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphry, you know my master is my friend, and those are people I never forget.

Humph. Sauciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him. [*Exit.*

Enter Phillis.

Phil. Oh, Mr. Thomas, is Mrs. Sugar-key at home? Lard, one is almost ashamed to pass along the streets! The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see anything dressed like a woman of condition, as it were on the same floor with them, pass by. Alas! alas! it is a sad thing to walk. O fortune! fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk? Why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr. Tom, but I wish I were generally carried in a coach or chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter, or slide, to be short-sighted, or stare, to fleer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and, if I was rich, I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. Oh, Tom! Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb, and I so great a coquet, and yet be such poor devils as we are?

Tom. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant for that——

Phil. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs. Judy, upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast manteaus: That any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy; for now only it was becoming. To my lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said, after somebody or other. Oh, Tom! Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all; but, you wretch, talk to me no more on the old odious subject—don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, madam.

[*In a submissive tone, retiring.*

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

Tom. Oh, I have her; I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon and set a-prating. [*Aside.*]—Why, truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

Phil. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it all of a sudden offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars, but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, sir, I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

Phil. Good Phillis! Saucy enough. But however——

Tom. I say, it is that thou art a part, which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, madam, to be serious, I am a man, at the bottom, of prodigious nice honor. You are too much exposed to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many, that would be your mistress's lovers, whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this, because I wrung you to the heart when I touched your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! Phillis! if you but knew my heart!

Phil. I know too much on't.

Tom. Nay, then, poor Crispo's fate and mine are one. Therefore give me leave to say, or sing at least, as he does upon the same occasion—

"Se vedette," &c. [*Sings.*]

Phil. What, do you think I'm to be fobbed off with a song? I don't question but you have sung the same to Mrs. Judy too.

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides, she is a poor hussy, and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis.

Phil. What would the fop be at now? In good time, indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune!

Tom. Dear Mrs. Phillis, you have such a spirit that we shall never be dull in marriage when we come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands.

[*He pulls out a purse, she eyes it.*

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr. Tom?

Tom. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleased or displeased; neither sick or well; when she lolls or loiters; when she's without desires—from having more of everything than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open, to look at her own dear image in the glass.

Phil. Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

Tom. There are also prosperous and

good-natured moments: as when a knot or a patch is happily fixed; when the complexion particularly flourishes.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why, then—or on the like occasions—we servants who have skill to know how to time business, see when such a pretty folded thing as this [*Shows a letter.*] may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humor. And, madam, because it is a long wearisome journey to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road.

[*Gives her the purse.*

Phil. Now you think me a corrupt hussy.

Tom. O fie, I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do, but I know my own innocence; I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one, I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say I do it, because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion; but I'll talk more of this as you see me on my way home. No, Tom, I assure thee, I take this trash of thy master's, not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose—

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who part with money never feign.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Bevil, Jun.'s *Lodgings.*

Bevil, Jun., *reading.*

Bev. Jun. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza! Such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirit for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart! If this lady my father urges me to marry should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? Is not she in equal distress with me? Has not the letter I have sent her this morning confessed my inclination to another? Nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements, too, to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give in to it; for, sure, to be denied is a favor any man may pretend to. It must be so—Well, then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father, I am ready to marry her. Then let me resolve upon, what I am not very good at, though it is an honest dissimulation.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, sir, is in the next room.

Bev. Jun. Dunce! Why did not you bring him in?

Tom. I told him, sir, you were in your closet.

Bev. Jun. I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father anywhere.

[*Going himself to the door.*

Tom. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. [*Aside.*

Bevil, Jun., *introducing* Sir John.

Bev. Jun. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant of all parents. Sure, 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are yours. Why would you not walk in, sir?

Sir J. Bev. I was loth to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

Bev. Jun. One to whom I am beholden for my birthday might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. Bev. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter; for courtship must then be over.

Bev. Jun. I assure you, sir, there was no insolence in it upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family; but much acknowledgment of the lady's greater desert.

Sir J. Bev. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? And will you really marry her?

Bev. Jun. Did I ever disobey any command of yours, sir? nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon?

Sir J. Bev. Why, I can't say you have, son; but methinks in this whole business, you have not been so warm as I could have wished you. You have visited her, it's true, but you have not been particular. Everyone knows you can say and do as handsome things as any man; but you have done nothing but lived in the general—been complaisant only.

Bev. Jun. As I am ever prepared to marry if you bid me, so I am ready to let it alone if you will have me.

[Humphry *enters, unobserved.*

Sir J. Bev. Look you there now! why, what am I to think of this so absolute and so indifferent a resignation?

Bev. Jun. Think? that I am still your son, sir. Sir, you have been married, and I have not. And you have, sir, found the inconvenience there is when a man weds

with too much love in his head. I have been told, sir, that at the time you married, you made a mighty bustle on the occasion. There was challenging and fighting, scaling walls, locking up the lady, and the gallant under an arrest for fear of killing all his rivals. Now, sir, I suppose you having found the ill consequences of these strong passions and prejudices, in preference of one woman to another, in case of a man's becoming a widower——

Sir J. Bev. How is this?

Bev. Jun. I say, sir, experience has made you wiser in your care of me; for, sir, since you lost my dear mother, your time has been so heavy, so lonely, and so tasteless, that you are so good as to guard me against the like unhappiness, by marrying me prudentially by way of bargain and sale. For, as you well judge, a woman that is espoused for a fortune, is yet a better bargain, if she dies; for then a man still enjoys what he did marry, the money, and is disencumbered of what he did not marry, the woman.

Sir J. Bev. But pray, sir, do you think Lucinda, then, a woman of such little merit?

Bev. Jun. Pardon me, sir, I don't carry it so far neither; I am rather afraid I shall like her too well; she has, for one of her fortune, a great many needless and superfluous good qualities.

Sir J. Bev. I am afraid, son, there's something I don't see yet, something that's smothered under all this raillery.

Bev. Jun. Not in the least, sir. If the lady is dressed and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

Humph. This may grow warm if I don't interpose. [*Aside.*]—Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. Bev. Oh! that's well! Then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way, you say.

Bev. Jun. If you please, sir, I'll take a chair, and go to Mr. Sealand's, where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. Bev. By no means. The old fellow will be so vain if he sees——

Bev. Jun. Ay; but the young lady, sir, will think me so indifferent.

Humph. Ay, there you are right; press your readiness to go to the bride—he won't let you. [*Aside to* BEV. JUN.

Bev. Jun. Are you sure of that?

[*Aside to* HUMPH.

Humph. How he likes being prevented. [*Aside.*

Sir J. Bev. No, no. You are an hour or two too early. [*Looking on his watch.*

Bev. Jun. You'll allow me, sir, to think it too late to visit a beautiful, virtuous young woman, in the pride and bloom of life, ready to give herself to my arms; and to place her happiness or misery, for the future, in being agreeable or displeasing to me, is a——Call a chair.

Sir J. Bev. No, no, no, dear Jack; this Sealand is a moody old fellow. There's no dealing with some people but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day. It is the last of his commanding his daughter.

Bev. Jun. Sir, he can't take it ill, that I am impatient to be hers.

Sir J. Bev. Pray let me govern in this matter; you can't tell how humorsome old fellows are. There's no offering reason to some of 'em, especially when they are rich.—If my son should see him before I've brought old Sealand into better temper, the match would be impracticable. [*Aside.*

Humph. Pray, sir, let me beg you to let Mr. Bevil go.—See whether he will or not. [*Aside to* SIR JOHN]—[*Then to* BEV.]—Pray, sir, command yourself; since you see my master is positive, it is better you should not go.

Bev. Jun. My father commands me, as to the object of my affections; but I hope he will not, as to the warmth and height of them.

Sir J. Bev. So! I must even leave things as I found them; and in the meantime, at least, keep old Sealand out of his sight—Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in your affair. You'll be in the way, I suppose, if I send to you. I'll leave your old friend with you—Humphry, don't let him stir, d'ye hear?—Your servant, your servant. [*Exit* SIR JOHN.

Humph. I have a sad time on't, sir, between you and my master. I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match.—I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good. Heaven grant a good end of this matter.—But there is a lady, sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow.—You'll pardon me.

Bev. Jun. Humphry, I know thou art a friend to both, and in that confidence I dare tell thee, that lady is a woman of honor and virtue. You may assure yourself I never will marry without my father's consent. But give me leave to say, too, this declaration does not come up to a promise that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

Humph. Come, sir, I wholly understand you. You would engage my services to free you from this woman whom my master intends you, to make way, in time, for the woman you have really a mind to.

Bev. Jun. Honest Humphry, you have always been a useful friend to my father and myself; I beg you continue your good offices, and don't let us come to the necessity of a dispute; for, if we should dispute, I must

either part with more than life, or lose the best of fathers.

Humph. My dear master, were I but worthy to know this secret, that so near concerns you, my life, my all should be engaged to serve you. This, sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret: your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain and tell you so.

Bev. Jun. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee. Be patient, then, and hear the story of my heart.

Humph. I am all attention, sir.

Bev. Jun. You may remember, Humphry, that in my last travels my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Humph. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

Bev. Jun. His fears were just; for there I first saw this lady. She is of English birth: her father's name was Danvers—a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol, who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go privately to the Indies. In this retreat, Providence again grew favorable to his industry, and, in six years' time, restored him to his former fortunes. On this he sent directions over that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship, and, with her husband's sister only, and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage—for here, poor creature, she lost her liberty and life. She and her family, with all they had, were, unfortunately, taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though as such not ill-treated, yet the fright, the shock, and cruel disappointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

Humph. Poor soul! O the helpless infant!

Bev. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her. The captain, too, proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having himself married an English woman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon this her little countrywoman, presenting her, with all her dead mother's movables of value, to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

Humph. Fortune here seemed again to smile on her.

Bev. Only to make her frowns more terrible; for, in his height of fortune, this captain, too, her benefactor, unfortunately was killed at sea; and dying intestate, his estate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother, who, coming soon to take possession, there found (among his other riches) this blooming virgin at his mercy.

Humph. He durst not, sure, abuse his power?

Bev. No wonder if his pampered blood was fired at the sight of her—in short, he loved; but when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered, too, his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty, demanding her to account for all her maintenance from her childhood; seized on her little fortune as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison, when Providence at the instant interposed, and sent me, by miracle, to relieve her.

Humph. 'Twas Providence, indeed. But pray, sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at last to England?

Bev. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts, descended to a composition, which I, without her knowledge, secretly discharged.

Humph. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

Bev. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England; where, no sooner arrived, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, immediately proposed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet.

Humph. I find, sir, you are irrecoverably fixed upon this lady.

Bev. As my vital life dwells in my heart—and yet you see what I do to please my father: walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow—But, Humphry, you have your lesson.

Humph. Now, sir, I have but one material question——

Bev. Ask it freely.

Humph. Is it, then, your own passion for this secret lady, or hers for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

Bev. I shall appear, Humphry, more romantic in my answer than in all the rest of my story; for though I dote on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me, yet in all my acquaintance and utmost privacies with her, I never once directly told her that I loved.

Humph. How was it possible to avoid it?

Bev. My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct that, till I have his consent to speak, I am determined, on that subject, to be dumb for ever.

Humph. Well, sir, to your praise be it spoken, you are certainly the most unfashionable lover in Great Britain.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle's at the next door, and, if you are at leisure, will be glad to wait on you.

Bev. Whenever he pleases——hold, Tom! did you receive no answer to my letter?

Tom. Sir, I was desired to call again; for I was told her mother would not let her be out of her sight; but about an hour hence, Mrs. Lettice said, I should certainly have one.

Bev. Very well. [*Exit* Tom.

Humph. Sir, I will take another opportunity. In the meantime, I only think it proper to tell you that, from a secret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you please, to marry Lucinda without the least hazard of its coming to a conclusion—Sir, your most obedient servant.

Bev. Honest Humphry, continue but my friend in this exigence, and you shall always find me yours. [*Exit* Humph.]—I long to hear how my letter has succeeded with Lucinda—but I think it cannot fail; for, at worst, were it possible she could take it ill, her resentment of my indifference may as probably occasion a delay as her taking it right. Poor Myrtle, what terrors must he be in all this while? Since he knows she is offered to me, and refused to him, there is no conversing or taking any measures with him for his own service.—But I ought to bear with my friend, and use him as one in adversity—

All his disquiets by my own I prove,
The greatest grief's perplexity in love.
[*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND

Scene I

Bevil, Jun.'s *Lodgings.*

Enter Bevil, Jun. *and* Tom.

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle.

Bev. Jun. Very well—do you step again, and wait for an answer to my letter.
[*Exit* Tom.

Enter Myrtle.

Bev. Jun. Well, Charles, why so much care in thy countenance? Is there anything in this world deserves it? You, who used to be so gay, so open, so vacant!

Myrt. I think we have of late changed complexions. You, who used to be much the graver man, are now all air in your behavior.—But the cause of my concern may, for aught I know, be the same object that gives you all this satisfaction. In a word, I am told that you are this very day—and your dress confirms me in it—to be married to Lucinda.

Bev. Jun. You are not misinformed.—Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival till you hear me out. I shall disoblige the best of fathers if I don't seem ready to marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her for your own service as you please; but I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing or complying unless you help me to escape the match.

Myrt. Escape? Sir, neither her merit or her fortune are below your acceptance—Escaping do you call it?

Bev. Jun. Dear sir, do you wish I should desire the match?

Myrt. No; but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that though I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I can't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

Bev. Jun. Pardon me, sir, I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit——

Myrt. Nay, dear Bevil, don't speak of her as if you loved her neither.

Bev. Jun. Why, then, to give you ease at once, though I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue, I know another in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

Myrt. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natured friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepossession for another, at once you gratify my fondness and cure my jealousy.

Bev. Jun. But all this while you take no notice, you have no apprehension, of another man that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myrt. Cimberton! hang him, a formal, philosophical, pedantic coxcomb; for the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity and very little judgment, shows his strongest bias is avarice; which is so predominant in him that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a jockey, and pays no more compliment to her personal charms than if she were a mere breeding animal.

Bev. Jun. Are you sure that is not affected? I have known some women sooner set on fire by that sort of negligence than by——

Myrt. No, no; hang him, the rogue has no art; it is pure, simple insolence and stupidity.

Bev. Jun. Yet, with all this, I don't take him for a fool.

Myrt. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick sense, though very slow understanding. He says, indeed, many things that want only the circumstances of

time and place to be very just and agreeable.

Bev. Jun. Well, you may be sure of me if you can disappoint him; but my intelligence says the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda, though those for mine with her are, by her father's order, ready for signing; but it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myrt. Pshaw! a poor troublesome woman. Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it. Besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her without the concurrence of his great uncle, Sir Geoffry, in the west.

Bev. Jun. Well, sir, and I can tell you that's the very point that is now laid before her counsel, to know whether a firm settlement can be made without this uncle's actual joining in it. Now, pray consider, sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it soon must, to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father, too, to hear his proposals?

Myrt. There you are right, indeed; that must be provided against. Do you know who are her counsel?

Bev. Jun. Yes, for your service I have found out that, too. They are Serjeant Bramble and Old Target—by the way, they are neither of them known in the family. Now, I was thinking why you might not put a couple of false counsel upon her to delay and confound matters a little; besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

Myrt. As how, pray?

Bev. Jun. Why, can't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be Old Bramble yourself?

Myrt. Ha! I don't dislike it.—But what shall I do for a brother in the case?

Bev. Jun. What think you of my fellow, Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimic. All his part will be but to stutter heartily, for that's old Target's case. Nay, it would be an immoral thing to mock him were it not that his impertinence is the occasion of its breaking out to that degree. The conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myrt. I like it of all things. If you'll send Tom to my chambers, I will give him full instructions. This will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for a while at least.

Bev. Jun. I'll warrant you success.—So far we are right, then. And now, Charles, your apprehension of my marrying her is all you have to get over.

Myrt. Dear Bevil, though I know you are my friend, yet when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know no objection she can make to you, or you to her, and therefore hope——

Bev. Jun. Dear Myrtle, I am as much obliged to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect; but, be assured, I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things with regard to me will end in your entire satisfaction.

Myrt. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can, though I cannot but remember that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity. [*Going.*

Bev. Jun. Then depend upon it, you have no chance against you.

Myrt. Nay, no ceremony, you know I must be going. [*Exit* Myrt.

Bev. Jun. Well, this is another instance of the perplexities which arise, too, in faithful friendship. We must often in this life go on in our good offices, even under the displeasure of those to whom we do them, in compassion to their weaknesses and mistakes.—But all this while poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me. She has no support or comfort but in my fidelity, yet sees me daily pressed to marriage with another. How painful, in such a crisis, must be every hour she thinks on me! I'll let her see at least my conduct to her is not changed. I'll take this opportunity to visit her; for though the religious vow I have made to my father restrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman that is the pure delight of my eyes and the guiltless joy of my heart. But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery—

To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain.

[*Exit.*

Scene II

Indiana's *Lodgings.*

Enter Isabella *and* Indiana.

Isab. Yes, I say 'tis artifice, dear child. I say to thee again and again 'tis all skill and management.

Ind. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality? attended, dressed, and lodged like one; in my appearance abroad and my furniture at home, every way in the most sumptuous manner, and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

Isab. Yes, yes.

Ind. And all this without so much as explaining to me that all about me comes from him!

Isab. Ay, ay, the more for that. That

keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

Ind. The more in him! He scorns the thought——

Isab. Then he—he—he——

Ind. Well, be not so eager. If he is an ill man, let us look into his stratagems. Here is another of them. [*Showing a letter.*] Here's two hundred and fifty pounds in bank notes, with these words: "To pay for the set of dressing-plate which will be brought home to-morrow." Why, dear aunt, now here's another piece of skill for you, which I own I cannot comprehend; and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say anything to the disadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is present I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life and the support of it; then, again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honor. When his eyes are cast another way, and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love. Oh! could I tell you——

Isab. Ah! you need not; I imagine all this for you.

Ind. This is my state of mind in his presence; and when he is absent, you are ever dinning my ears with notions of the arts of men; that his hidden bounty, his respectful conduct, his careful provision for me, after his preserving me from utmost misery, are certain signs he means nothing but to make I know not what of me.

Isab. Oh! You have a sweet opinion of him, truly.

Ind. I have, when I am with him, ten thousand things, besides my sex's natural decency and shame, to suppress my heart, that yearns to thank, to praise, to say it loves him. I say, thus it is with me while I see him; and in his absence I am entertained with nothing but your endeavors to tear this amiable image from my heart; and in its stead, to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honor.

Isab. Ah, poor soul! has not his plot taken? don't you die for him? has not the way he has taken, been the most proper with you? Oh! oh! He has sense, and has judged the thing right.

Ind. Go on then, since nothing can answer you; say what you will of him. Heigh! ho!

Isab. Heigh! ho! indeed. It is better to say so, as you are now, than as many others are. There are, among the destroyers of women, the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble, who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters. I will own to you, Mr. Bevil carries his hypocrisy the best of any man living, but still he is a man, and therefore a hypocrite. They have usurped an exemption from shame for any baseness, any cruelty towards us. They embrace without love; they make vows without conscience of obligation; they are partners, nay, seducers to the crime, wherein they pretend to be less guilty.

Ind. That's truly observed. [*Aside.*]—But what's all this to Bevil?

Isab. This it is to Bevil and all mankind. Trust not those who will think the worse of you for your confidence in them; serpents who lie in wait for doves. Won't you be on your guard against those who would betray you? Won't you doubt those who would contemn you for believing 'em? Take it from me, fair and natural dealing is to invite injuries; 'tis bleating to escape wolves who would devour you! Such is the world—[*Aside.*] and such (since the behavior of one man to myself) have I believed all the rest of the sex.

Ind. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it. He has not spoke it by an organ that is given to lying. His eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concerned for? my lesson is very short. If he takes me for ever, my purpose of life is only to please him. If he leaves me (which Heaven avert) I know he'll do it nobly, and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happened to me.

Isab. Ay, do, persist in your credulity! flatter yourself that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar for love.

Ind. The town! I must tell you, madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil will but make themselves more ridiculous; his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

Isab. O' my conscience he has turned her head.—Come, come, if he were the honest fool you take him for, why has he kept you here these three weeks, without sending you to Bristol in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

Ind. I am convinced he still designs it, and that nothing keeps him here, but the necessity of not coming to a breach with his father in regard to the match he has proposed him. Beside, has he not writ to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there almost these twenty years?

Isab. All sham, mere evasion; he is afraid, if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his

hands, and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

Ind. Wicked hopes! did I ever give him any such?

Isab. Has he ever given you any honest ones? Can you say, in your conscience, he has ever once offered to marry you?

Ind. No! but by his behavior I am convinced he will offer it, the moment 'tis in his power, or consistent with his honor, to make such a promise good to me.

Isab. His honor!

Ind. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy, by these ungrateful jealousies of one, to whom I am, and wish to be, obliged. For from his integrity alone, I have resolved to hope for happiness.

Isab. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it!

Ind. Let it be—This is his hour of visiting me.

Isab. Oh! to be sure, keep up your form; don't see him in a bed-chamber—[*Apart.*]. This is pure prudence, when she is liable, wherever he meets her, to be conveyed where'er he pleases.

Ind. All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes. I live only when I'm with him. [*Exit.*

Isab. Well, go thy ways, thou wilful innocent!—I once had almost as much love for a man, who poorly left me to marry an estate; and I am now, against my will, what they call an old maid—but I will not let the peevishness of that condition grow upon me, only keep up the suspicion of it, to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Indiana, *speaking to a Servant.*

Ind. Desire Mr. Bevil to walk in—Design! impossible! A base designing mind could never think of what he hourly puts in practice. And yet, since the late rumor of his marriage, he seems more reserved than formerly—he sends in too, before he sees me, to know if I am at leisure—such new respect may cover coldness in the heart; it certainly makes me thoughtful—I'll know the worst at once; I'll lay such fair occasions in his way, that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation, for these doubts are insupportable!—But see, he comes, and clears them all.

Enter Bevil.

Bev. Madam, your most obedient—I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night; 'twas very late before we parted, but 'twas your own fault. I never saw you in such agreeable humor.

Ind. I am extremely glad we were both pleased; for I thought I never saw you better company.

Bev. Me, madam! you rally; I said very little.

Ind. But I am afraid you heard me say a great deal; and, when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

Bev. Then it's pity, madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

Ind. If I had your talent or power, to make my actions speak for me, I might indeed be silent, and yet pretend to something more than the agreeable.

Bev. If I might be vain of anything in my power, madam, 'tis that my understanding, from all your sex, has marked you out as the most deserving object of my esteem.

Ind. Should I think I deserve this, 'twere enough to make my vanity forfeit the very esteem you offer me.

Bev. How so, madam?

Ind. Because esteem is the result of reason, and to deserve it from good sense, the height of human glory. Nay, I had rather a man of honor should pay me that, than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

Bev. Jun. You certainly distinguish right, madam; love often kindles from external merit only.

Ind. But esteem rises from a higher source, the merit of the soul.

Bev. Jun. True—and great souls only can deserve it. [*Bowing respectfully.*

Ind. Now I think they are greater still, that can so charitably part with it.

Bev. Jun. Now, madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride and pleasure of my life is, that I esteem you as I ought.

Ind. [*Aside.*] As he ought! still more perplexing! he neither saves nor kills my hope.

Bev. Jun. But, madam, we grow grave, methinks. Let's find some other subject—Pray how did you like the opera last night?

Ind. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

Bev. Jun. Oh! your servant, madam. But pray tell me, you now, who are never partial to the fashion, I fancy must be the properest judge of a mighty dispute among the ladies, that is, whether *Crispo* or *Griselda* is the more agreeable entertainment.

Ind. With submission now, I cannot be a proper judge of this question.

Bev. How so, madam?

Ind. Because I find I have a partiality for one of them.

Bev. Jun. Pray which is that?

Ind. I do not know; there's something in that rural cottage of Griselda, her forlorn condition, her poverty, her solitude, her

resignation, her innocent slumbers, and that lulling *dolce sogno* that's sung over her; it had an effect upon me that—in short I never was so well deceived, at any of them.

Bev. Jun. Oh! Now then, I can account for the dispute. Griselda, it seems, is the distress of an injured innocent woman, Crispo, that only of a man in the same condition; therefore the men are mostly concerned for Crispo, and, by a natural indulgence, both sexes for Griselda.

Ind. So that judgment, you think, ought to be for one, though fancy and complaisance have got ground for the other. Well! I believe you will never give me leave to dispute with you on any subject; for I own, Crispo has its charms for me too. Though in the main, all the pleasure the best opera gives us is but mere sensation. Methinks it's pity the mind can't have a little more share in the entertainment. The music's certainly fine, but, in my thoughts, there's none of your composers come up to old Shakespeare and Otway.

Bev. How, madam! why if a woman of your sense were to say this in the drawing-room——

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's Signor Carbonelli says he waits your commands in the next room.

Bev. Apropos! you were saying yesterday, madam, you had a mind to hear him. Will you give him leave to entertain you now?

Ind. By all means; desire the gentleman to walk in. [*Exit Servant.*

Bev. I fancy you will find something in this hand that is uncommon.

Ind. You are always finding ways, Mr. Bevil, to make life seem less tedious to me.

Enter Music Master.

When the gentleman pleases.

[*After a Sonata is played,* Bevil *waits on the Master to the door, etc.*

Bev. You smile, madam, to see me so complaisant to one whom I pay for his visit. Now, I own, I think it is not enough barely to pay those whose talents are superior to our own (I mean such talents as would become our condition, if we had them). Methinks we ought to do something more than barely gratify them for what they do at our command, only because their fortune is below us.

Ind. You say I smile. I assure you it was a smile of approbation; for, indeed, I cannot but think it the distinguishing part of a gentleman to make his superiority of fortune as easy to his inferiors as he can.—Now once more to try him. [*Aside.*]—I was saying just now, I believed you would never let me dispute with you, and I dare say it will always be so. However, I must have your opinion upon a subject which created a debate between my aunt and me, just before you came hither; she would needs have it that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman, but for his own sake.

Bev. Well, madam! Indeed I can't but be of her mind.

Ind. What, though he should maintain and support her, without demanding anything of her, on her part?

Bev. Why, madam, is making an expense in the service of a valuable woman (for such I must suppose her), though she should never do him any favor, nay, though she should never know who did her such service, such a mighty heroic business?

Ind. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mould.

Bev. Dear madam, why so? 'tis but, at best, a better taste in expense. To bestow upon one, whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation, to be conscious, that from his superfluity, an innocent, a virtuous spirit is supported above the temptations and sorrows of life! That he sees satisfaction, health, and gladness in her countenance, while he enjoys the happiness of seeing her (as that I will suppose too, or he must be too abstracted, too insensible), I say, if he is allowed to delight in that prospect; alas, what mighty matter is there in all this?

Ind. No mighty matter in so disinterested a friendship!

Bev. Disinterested! I can't think him so; your hero, madam, is no more than what every gentleman ought to be, and I believe very many are. He is only one who takes more delight in reflections than in sensations. He is more pleased with thinking than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him. Why, madam, a greater expense than all this, men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses.

Ind. Can you be sincere in what you say?

Bev. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately.

Ind. No, that he does not.

Bev. Nor cards, nor dice.

Ind. No.

Bev. Nor bottle companions.

Ind. No.

Bev. Nor loose women.

Ind. No, I'm sure he does not.

Bev. Take my word then, if your admired hero is not liable to any of these kind of demands, there's no such pre-eminence in this as you imagine. Nay, this way of expense you speak of is what exalts and raises him that has a taste for it; and, at

the same time, his delight is incapable of satiety, disgust, or penitence.

Ind. But still I insist his having no private interest in the action, makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

Bev. Dear madam, I never knew you more mistaken. Why, who can be more a usurer than he who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true taste of life, to ease an aching heart; to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore which is superfluous and otherwise useless in a man's own pocket? What could a man do better with his cash? This is the effect of an humane disposition, where there is only a general tie of nature and common necessity. What then must it be when we serve an object of merit, of admiration!

Ind. Well! the more you argue against it the more I shall admire the generosity.

Bev. Nay, nay—Then, madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument. I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and begone while we are friends, and before things are brought to an extremity. [*Exit, carelessly.*

Enter Isabella.

Isab. Well, madam, what think you of him now, pray?

Ind. I protest, I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view but the mere pleasure of doing it, and has neither good or bad designs upon me.

Isab. Ah! dear niece! don't be in fear of both! I'll warrant you, you will know time enough that he is not indifferent.

Ind. You please me when you tell me so; for, if he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honor.

Isab. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other. I saw the respectful downcast of his eye, when you catcht him gazing at you during the music. He, I warrant, was surprised, as if he had been taken stealing your watch. Oh! the undissembled guilty look!

Ind. But did you observe any such thing, really? I thought he looked most charmingly graceful! How engaging is modesty in a man, when one knows there is a great mind within. So tender a confusion! and yet, in other respects, so much himself, so collected, so dauntless, so determined!

Isab. Ah! niece! there is a sort of bashfulness which is the best engine to carry on a shameless purpose. Some men's modesty serves their wickedness, as hypocrisy gains the respect due to piety. But I will own to you, there is one hopeful symptom, if there could be such a thing as a disinterested lover. But it's all a perplexity—till—till—till——

Ind. Till what?

Isab. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes.—And that I will be convinced of before I sleep; for you shall not be deceived.

Ind. I'm sure I never shall, if your fears can guard me. In the meantime I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

As conscious honor all his actions steers,
So conscious innocence dispels my fears.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD

Scene I

Sealand's *House.*

Enter Tom, *meeting* Phillis.

Tom. Well, Phillis! What, with a face as if you had never seen me before!—What a work have I to do now? She has seen some new visitant at their house whose airs she has catcht, and is resolved to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance through before she'll answer this plain question: videlicet, have you delivered my master's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well to ask an account of it in an ordinary way; I'll be in my airs as well as she. [*Aside.*]—Well, madam, as unhappy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not, in the general, be any other than what I am. I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter than I am at this instant.

[*Looking steadfastly at her.*

Phil. Did ever anybody doubt, Master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

Tom. I am, indeed. The thing I have least reason to be satisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty. Perhaps if I were rich I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

Phil. How prettily was that said! But I'll have a great deal more before I'll say one word. [*Aside.*

Tom. I should, perhaps, have been stupidly above her had I not been her equal; and by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant for hire—I am my mistress's from choice, would she but approve my passion.

Phil. I think it's the first time I ever heard you speak of it with any sense of the anguish, if you really do suffer any.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! can you doubt, after what you have seen?

Phil. I know not what I have seen, nor what I have heard; but since I'm at leisure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me; how you fell in love with me; and what you have suffered or are ready to suffer for me.

Tom. Oh, the unmerciful jade! when I'm in haste about my master's letter. But I must go through it. [*Aside.*]—Ah! too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion I was first surprised. It was on the 1st of April, 1715, I came into Mr. Sealand's service; I was then a hobbledehoy, and you a pretty little tight girl, a favorite handmaid of the housekeeper. At that time we neither of us knew what was in us. I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean; the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phil. I think I remember the silly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you—you could not guess what surprised me. You took no delight when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close, and breathed upon the glass, and when my lips approached, a dirty cloth you rubbed against my face, and hid your beauteous form! When I again drew near, you spit, and rubbed, and smiled at my undoing.

Phil. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thisbe—but ten times harder was my fate. Pyramus could peep only through a wall; I saw her, saw my Thisbe in all her beauty, but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls between—for there was more: there was her will against me. Would she but yet relent! O Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. Oh! my charming Phillis, if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer—but, dearest creature, consider our miserable state.

Phil. How! Miserable!

Tom. We are miserable to be in love, and under the command of others than those we love; with that generous passion in the heart, to be sent to and fro on errands, called, checked, and rated for the meanest trifles. Oh, Phillis! you don't know how many china cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break. You have broke my fortune as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you that I believe your master writes and you speak the best of any men in the world. Never was woman so well pleased with a letter as my young lady was with his; and this is an answer to it.

[*Gives him a letter.*

Tom. This was well done, my dearest; consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves by closing their affairs. It will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tenement, out of their large possessions. Whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themselves. One acre with Phillis would be worth a whole county without her.

Phil. O, could I but believe you!

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch of my lips. [*Kisses her.*

Phil. There's no contradicting you. How closely you argue, Tom!

Tom. And will closer, in due time. But I must hasten with this letter, to hasten towards the possession of you. Then, Phillis, consider how I must be revenged, look to it, of all your skittishness, shy looks, and at best but coy compliances.

Phil. Oh, Tom, you grow wanton, and sensual, as my lady calls it; I must not endure it. Oh! foh! you are a man—an odious, filthy, male creature—you should behave, if you had a right sense or were a man of sense, like Mr. Cimberton, with distance and indifference; or, let me see, some other becoming hard word, with seeming in-in-inadvertency, and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey.—But hush! the ladies are coming.—Good Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone. Lard, we have been fooling and toying, and not considered the main business of our masters and mistresses.

Tom. Why, their business is to be fooling and toying as soon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remembered, parchments; my lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb cousin, Cimberton, and my mistress, though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepared between your master, Mr. Bevil, and my mistress; and, I believe, my mistress herself has signed and sealed, in her heart, to Mr. Myrtle.—Did I not bid you kiss me but once, and be gone? But I know you won't be satisfied.

Tom. No, you smooth creature, how should I? [*Kissing her hand.*

Phil. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality. [*They salute formally.*

Tom. Pox of all this state.

[*Offers to kiss her more closely.*

Phil. No, prithee, Tom, mind your business. We must follow that interest which will take, but endeavor at that which will be most for us, and we like most. Oh, here's my young mistress! [Tom *taps her neck behind, and kisses his fingers.*] Go, ye liquorish fool. [*Exit* Tom.

Enter Lucinda.

Luc. Who was that you was hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away then?

Phil. For your ladyship's service—to carry your ladyship's letter to his master. I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he so little love for his master?

Phil. No; but he hath so much love for his mistress.

Luc. But I thought I heard him kiss you. Why did you suffer that?

Phil. Why, madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love—We servants, we poor people, that have nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, are forced to deal and bargain by way of sample, and therefore as we have no parchments or wax necessary in our agreements, we squeeze with our hands and seal with our lips, to ratify vows and promises.

Luc. But can't you trust one another without such earnest down?

Phil. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert merry hussy.

Phil. I wish, madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your servant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, madam; and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle, what your father will do with Mr. Bevil, nor what you all, especially my lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here as if he were married to you already; nay, you are married actually as far as people of quality are.

Luc. How is that?

Phil. You have different beds in the same house.

Luc. Pshaw! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions in the letter I gave you for him. But my father, in his heart, still has a mind to him, were it not for this woman they talk of; and I am apt to imagine he is married to her, or never designs to marry at all.

Phil. Then Mr. Myrtle——

Luc. He had my parents' leave to apply to me, and by that he has won me and my affections; who is to have this body of mine without 'em, it seems, is nothing to me. My mother says 'tis indecent for me to let my thoughts stray about the person of my husband; nay, she says a maid, rigidly virtuous, though she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man when she sees him in a third place.

Phil. That is more than the severity of a nun, for not to see when one may is hardly possible; not to see when one can't is very easy. At this rate, madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen who——

Luc. Mamma says the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so. When your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him, then you are to see him; then you are to observe and take notice of him; because then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember you are to love as well as obey?

Luc. To love is a passion, 'tis a desire, and we must have no desires.—Oh, I cannot endure the reflection! With what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience have I been exposed and offered to some awkward booby or other in every county of Great Britain!

Phil. Indeed, madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb. As fast as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and person have been the tittle-tattle of the whole town. What is this world come to?—no shame left—to be bartered for like the beasts of the field, and that in such an instance as coming together to an entire familiarity and union of soul and body. Oh! and this without being so much as well-wishers to each other, but for increase of fortune.

Phil. But, madam, all these vexations will end very soon in one for all. Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly; nay, has (whether you know it or no) been in treaty with Sir Geoffry, who, to join in the settlement, has accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence?

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great

Britain—the art of listening, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Luc. I shall soon know as much as you do; leave me, leave me, Phillis, begone. Here, here! I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants, though I must converse with no one else. [*Exit* Phil.]—How unhappy are we who are born to great fortunes! No one looks at us with indifference, or acts towards us on the foot of plain dealing; yet, by all I have been heretofore offered to or treated for I have been used with the most agreeable of all abuses—flattery. But now, by this phlegmatic fool I'm used as nothing, or a mere thing. He, forsooth, is too wise, too learned to have any regard to desires, and I know not what the learned oaf calls sentiments of love and passion—Here he comes with my mother—It's much if he looks at me, or if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other movable in the room.

Enter Mrs. Sealand, *and* Mr. Cimberton.

Mrs. Seal. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of yours, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honorable house in consulting a means to keep the blood as pure and as regularly descended as may be.

Cim. Why, really, madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and their imaginations so bewildered in flesh and blood, that a man of reason can't talk to be understood. They have no ideas of happiness, but what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst.

Luc. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb! [*Aside.*

Cim. And in truth, madam, I have considered it as a most brutal custom that persons of the first character in the world should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame, to bed as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the species as openly as to the preservation of the individual.

Luc. She that willingly goes to bed to thee must have no shame, I'm sure. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Seal. Oh, cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined is your sense of things! But, indeed, it is too true there is nothing so ordinary as to say, in the best governed families, my master and lady are gone to bed; one does not know but it might have been said of one's self. [*Hiding her face with her fan.*

Cim. Lycurgus, madam, instituted otherwise; among the Lacedæmonians the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themselves knew by whom; their meetings were secret, and the amorous congress always by stealth; and no such professed doings between the sexes as are tolerated among us under the audacious word, marriage.

Mrs. Seal. Oh, had I lived in those days and been a matron of Sparta, one might with less indecency have had ten children, according to that modest institution, than one, under the confusion of our modern, barefaced manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman, she has gone through the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Seal. We will talk then of business. That girl walking about the room there is to be your wife. She has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother.

Cimb. I have observed her; her lively look, free air, and disengaged countenance speak her very——

Luc. Very what?

Cimb. If you please, madam—to set her a little that way.

Mrs. Seal. Lucinda, say nothing to him, you are not a match for him; when you are married, you may speak to such a husband when you're spoken to. But I am disposing of you above yourself every way.

Cimb. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniences I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part. As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment than a help to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can at all times subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man. Ha! ay, the vermilion of her lips.

Luc. Pray, don't talk of me thus.

Cimb. The pretty enough—pant of her bosom.

Luc. Sir! madam, don't you hear him?

Cimb. Her forward chest.

Luc. Intolerable!

Cimb. High health.

Luc. The grave, easy impudence of him!

Cimb. Proud heart.

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cimb. I say, madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a spring in her step!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you strange unaccountable!

Cimb. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries!

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries.

Mrs. Seal. Oh, child! hear him, he talks finely; he's a scholar, he knows what you have.

Cimb. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the

indignation you see in the pretty little thing—Now, I am considering her, on this occasion, but as one that is to be pregnant.

Luc. The familiar, learned, unseasonable puppy! [*Aside.*

Cimb. And pregnant undoubtedly she will be yearly. I fear I shan't, for many years, have discretion enough to give her one fallow season.

Luc. Monster! there's no bearing it. The hideous sot! there's no enduring it, to be thus surveyed like a steed at sale.

Cimb. At sale! She's very illiterate—But she's very well limbed too; turn her in; I see what she is. [*Exit* LUCINDA, *in a rage.*

Mrs. Seal. Go, you creature, I am ashamed of you.

Cimb. No harm done—you know, madam, the better sort of people, as I observed to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings [*Adjusting himself at the glass.*]—and the woman in the bargain, like the mansion house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in, and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all considered.

Mrs. Seal. I grant it; and therefore make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other accomplishment, as the common world think 'em, because she is not polite.

Cimb. Madam, I know your exalted understanding, abstracted, as it is, from vulgar prejudices, will not be offended, when I declare to you, I marry to have an heir to my estate, and not to beget a colony, or a plantation. This young woman's beauty and constitution will demand provision for a tenth child at least.

Mrs. Seal. With all that wit and learning, how considerate! What an economist! [*Aside.*]—Sir, I cannot make her any other than she is; or say she is much better than the other young women of this age, or fit for much besides being a mother; but I have given directions for the marriage settlements, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton's counsel is to meet ours here, at this hour, concerning his joining in the deed, which, when executed, makes you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda's fortune. Herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

Cimb. No, no, no, indeed, madam, it is not usual; and I must depend upon my own reflection and philosophy not to overstock my family.

Mrs. Seal. I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton; but she is, for aught I see, as well as the daughter of anybody else.

Cimb. That is very true, madam.

Enter a Servant, who whispers MRS. SEALAND.

Mrs. Seal. The lawyers are come, and now we are to hear what they have resolved as to the point whether it's necessary that Sir Geoffry should join in the settlement, as being what they call in the remainder. But, good cousin, you must have patience with 'em. These lawyers, I am told, are of a different kind; one is what they call a chamber counsel, the other a pleader. The conveyancer is slow, from an imperfection in his speech, and therefore shunned the bar, but extremely passionate and impatient of contradiction. The other is as warm as he; but has a tongue so voluble, and a head so conceited, he will suffer nobody to speak but himself.

Cimb. You mean old Serjeant Target and Counsellor Bramble? I have heard of 'em.

Mrs. Seal. The same. Show in the gentlemen. [*Exit Servant.*

Re-enter Servant, introducing MYRTLE *and* TOM *disguised as* BRAMBLE *and* TARGET.

Mrs. Seal. Gentlemen, this is the party concerned, Mr. Cimberton; and I hope you have considered of the matter.

Tar. Yes, madam, we have agreed that it must be by indent——dent——dent——dent——

Bram. Yes, madam, Mr. Serjeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleased to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be, for Sir Geoffry must needs be a party; old Cimberton, in the year 1619, says, in that ancient roll in Mr. Serjeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had, will more at large appear——

Tar. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands, it appears that——

Bram. Mr. Serjeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody; but speak to the titles in your own deeds. I shall not show that deed till my client is in town.

Cimb. You know best your own methods.

Mrs. Seal. The single question is, whether the entail is such that my cousin, Sir Geoffry, is necessary in this affair?

Bram. Yes, as to the lordship of Tretriplet, but not as to the messuage of Grimgribber.

Tar. I say that Gr—gr— that Gr—gr— Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us; that is to say the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—tr—Triplet.

Bram. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made in the middle of the last century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it pass to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I question whether the remainder even to Tretriplet is in him—But we are willing to waive that, and give him a valuable consideration. But we shall not purchase what is in us for ever, as Grimgribber is, at the rate, as we guard against the contingent of Mr. Cimberton

having no son—Then we know Sir Geoffry is the first of the collateral male line in this family—yet——

Tar. Sir, Gr——gr——ber is——

Bram. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclined to hear that in all its parts—But, sir, I see very plainly what you are going into. I tell you, it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton, as that he may outlive him.

Tar. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must say——

Bram. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argument; but that will go no farther than as to the claimants under old Cimberton. I am of opinion that, according to the instruction of Sir Ralph, he could not dock the entail, and then create a new estate for the heirs general.

Tar. Sir, I have not patience to be told that, when Gr——gr——ber——

Bram. I will allow it you, Mr. Serjeant; but there must be the word heirs for ever, to make such an estate as you pretend.

Cimb. I must be impartial, though you are counsel for my side of the question. Were it not that you are so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should think it very hard you should answer him without hearing him—But, gentlemen, I believe you have both considered this matter, and are firm in your different opinions. 'Twere better, therefore, you proceeded according to the particular sense of each of you, and gave your thoughts distinctly in writing. And do you see, sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you say in English.

Bram. Why, what is all we have been saying? In English! Oh! but I forgot myself, you're a wit. But, however, to please you, sir, you shall have it, in as plain terms as the law will admit of.

Cimb. But I would have it, sir, without delay.

Bram. That, sir, the law will not admit of. The Courts are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment obliged to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I should not be in the hall to attend one of 'em at least; the rest would take it ill else. Therefore, I must leave what I have said to Mr. Serjeant's consideration, and I will digest his arguments on my part, and you shall hear from me again, sir. [*Exit* Bramble.

Tar. Agreed, agreed.

Cimb. Mr. Bramble is very quick; he parted a little abruptly.

Tar. He could not bear my argument; I pinched him to the quick about that Gr——gr——ber.

Mrs. Seal. I saw that, for he durst not so much as hear you. I shall send to you, Mr. Serjeant, as soon as Sir Geoffry comes to town, and then I hope all may be adjusted.

Tar. I shall be at my chambers, at my usual hours. [*Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, if you please, I'll now attend you to the tea table, where I shall hear from your ladyship reason and good sense, after all this law and gibberish.

Mrs. Seal. 'Tis a wonderful thing, sir, that men of professions do not study to talk the substance of what they have to say in the language of the rest of the world. Sure, they'd find their account in it.

Cim. They might, perhaps, madam, with people of your good sense; but with the generality 'twould never do. The vulgar would have no respect for truth and knowledge, if they were exposed to naked view.

Truth is too simple, of all art bereaved:
Since the world will—why let it be deceived.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH

Scene I

Bevil, Jun.'s *Lodgings.*

Bevil, Jun., *with a letter in his hand, followed by* Tom.

Tom. Upon my life, sir, I know nothing of the matter. I never opened my lips to Mr. Myrtle about anything of your honor's letter to Madam Lucinda.

Bev. What's the fool in such a fright for? I don't suppose you did. What I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle showed any suspicion, or asked you any questions, to lead you to say casually that you had carried any such letter for me this morning.

Tom. Why, sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

Bev. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you, but him. What did he say to you?

Tom. Why, sir, when I came to his chambers, to be dressed for the lawyer's part your honor was pleased to put me upon, he asked me if I had been at Mr. Sealand's this morning? So I told him, sir, I often went thither—because, sir, if I had not said that he might have thought there was something more in my going now than at another time.

Bev. Very well!—The fellow's caution, I find, has given him this jealousy. [*Aside.*]—Did he ask you no other questions?

Tom. Yes, sir; now I remember, as we came away in the hackney coach from Mr. Sealand's, Tom, says he, as I came in to your master this morning, he bade you go for an answer to a letter he had sent. Pray did you bring him any? says he. Ah! says I, sir, your honor is pleased to joke with

me; you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret or no?

Bev. And so, by showing him you could, you told him you had one?

Tom. Sir—— [*Confused.*

Bev. What mean actions does jealousy make a man stoop to! How poorly has he used art with a servant to make him betray his master!—Well! and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pulled off his lawyer's gown, at his own chambers.

Bev. Very well; and what did he say when you brought him my answer to it?

Tom. He looked a little out of humor, sir, and said it was very well.

Bev. I knew he would be grave upon't; wait without.

Tom. Hum! 'gad, I don't like this; I am afraid we are all in the wrong box here. [*Exit* TOM.

Bev. I put on a serenity while my fellow was present; but I have never been more thoroughly disturbed. This hot man! to write me a challenge, on supposed artificial dealing, when I professed myself his friend! I can live contented without glory; but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But first let me consider Lucinda's letter again. [*Reads.*

"SIR,

"I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge that your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in our family, and desiring the refusal may come from me, has something more engaging in it than the courtship of him who, I fear, will fall to my lot, except your friend exerts himself for our common safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter till hereafter, and am your most obliged humble servant,

"LUCINDA SEALAND."

Well, but the postscript— [*Reads.*

"I won't, upon second thoughts, hide anything from you. But my reason for concealing this is, that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper which gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him inclines me to hope that only an ill effect which sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what may be cured by a careful and unblamable conduct."

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confidant, and put herself, in a kind, under my protection. I cannot tell him immediately the purport of her letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and so serve him, and her, by disobeying her, in the article of secrecy, more than I should by complying with her directions.—But then this duelling, which custom has imposed upon every man who would live with reputation and honor in the world—how must I preserve myself from imputations there? He'll, forsooth, call it or think it fear, if I explain without fighting.—But his letter—I'll read it again—

"SIR,

"You have used me basely in corresponding and carrying on a treaty where you told me you were indifferent. I have changed my sword since I saw you; which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting between you and the injured

"CHARLES MYRTLE."

Enter TOM.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, sir. Would your honor please to see him?

Bev. Why, you stupid creature! Let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Show him up. [*Exit* TOM.] Well! I am resolved upon my carriage to him. He is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for—but here he is.

Enter TOM, *introducing* MYRTLE.

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honor.—[*To* TOM.] But, sir, you, with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit* TOM.]—Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myrt. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without farther ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have farther notice taken of my message than these half lines—"I have yours," "I shall be at home."

Bev. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you in a very unusual style; but as I design everything in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleased to confirm face to face, and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myrt. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness; and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine—to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

Bev. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle?

Myrt. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

Bev. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at; but, sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced, to the breach of all laws, both divine and human.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil, it would be a good first principle, in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries, as——

Bev. As what?

Myrt. As fear of answering for 'em.

Bev. As fear of answering for 'em! But that apprehension is just or blamable according to the object of that fear. I have often told you, in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into His presence—I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against Him, and immediately to urge on to His tribunal.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you, this coolness, this gravity, this show of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have, indeed, the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda. But consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it, if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector.

Bev. Sir, show me but the least glimpse of argument, that I am authorised, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will show thee—to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage—slight, inconsiderate man!—There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger; and you shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

Myrt. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours; and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honor; you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man, goes on like common business, and in the interim you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess, for your soft moments of dalliance, your convenient, your ready Indiana.

Bev. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man; and I'm excusable, in the guard of innocence (or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more), to accept your invitation, and observe your letter—Sir, I'll attend you.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Did you call, sir? I thought you did; I heard you speak aloud.

Bev. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—master—Mr. Myrtle—friends—gentlemen—what d'ye mean? I am but a servant, or——

Bev. Call a coach. [*Exit* Tom.]—[*A long pause, walking sullenly by each other.*]—[*Aside.*] Shall I (though provoked to the uttermost) recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine? [*Shutting the door.*]—[*To* Myrtle.] I have, thank Heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you suffer; when perhaps too much regard to a false point of honor makes me prolong that suffering.

Myrt. I am sure Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his sword.

Bev. Why, then, would you ask it first that way?

Myrt. Consider, you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

Bev. True; but let me tell you, I have saved you from the most exquisite distress, even though you had succeeded in the dispute. I know you so well, that I am sure to have found this letter about a man you had killed would have been worse than death to yourself—Read it.—[*Aside.*] When he is thoroughly mortified, and shame has got the better of jealousy, when he has seen himself throughly, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda.

Myrt. With what a superiority has he turned the injury on me, as the aggressor? I begin to fear I have been too far transported—*A treaty in our family!* is not that saying too much? I shall relapse.—But I find (on the postscript) *something like jealousy.* With what face can I see my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer? [*Aside.*]—Oh! Bevil, with what words shall I——

Bev. There needs none; to convince is much more than to conquer.

Myrt. But can you——

Bev. You have o'erpaid the inquietude you gave me, in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! thy face is altered to that of another man; to that of my companion, my friend.

Myrt. That I could be such a precipitant wretch!

Bev. Pray, no more.

Myrt. Let me reflect how many friends have died, by the hands of friends, for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say again, and again, how much I am be-

holden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with. What had become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason?

Bev. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myrt. Dear Bevil, your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice. And yet how many have been sacrificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear.

Betrayed by honor, and compelled by shame,
They hazard being, to preserve a name:
Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake,
Till plunged in sad eternity they wake.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

St. James's Park.

Enter Sir John Bevil *and* Mr. Sealand.

Sir J. Bev. Give me leave, however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house. Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort.

Mr. Seal. Genealogy and descent! Sir, there has been in our family a very large one. There was Galfrid the father of Edward, the father of Ptolomey, the father of Crassus, the father of Earl Richard, the father of Henry the Marquis, the father of Duke John——

Sir J. Bev. What, do you rave, Mr. Sealand? all these great names in your family?

Mr. Seal. These? yes, sir. I have heard my father name 'em all, and more.

Sir J. Bev. Ay, sir? and did he say they were all in your family?

Mr. Seal. Yes, sir, he kept 'em all. He was the greatest cocker in England. He said Duke John won him many battles, and never lost one.

Sir J. Bev. Oh, sir, your servant! you are laughing at my laying any stress upon descent; but I must tell you, sir, I never knew anyone but he that wanted that advantage turn it into ridicule.

Mr. Seal. And I never knew any one who had many better advantages put that into his account.—But, Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your ancient house, I am to talk freely of everything you are pleased to put into your bill of rates on this occasion; yet, sir, I have made no objections to your son's family. 'Tis his morals that I doubt.

Sir J. Bev. Sir, I can't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit may be no stain to a gentleman's honor.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, the honor of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit of a trader. We are talking of a marriage, and in such a case, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honor or credit of her lover that he is a keeper——

Sir J. Bev. Mr. Sealand, don't take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases.

Sir J. Bev. My son, sir, is a discreet and sober gentleman.

Mr. Seal. Sir, I never saw a man that wenched soberly and discreetly, that ever left it off; the decency observed in the practice hides, even from the sinner, the iniquity of it. They pursue it, not that their appetites hurry 'em away, but, I warrant you, because 'tis their opinion they may do it.

Sir J. Bev. Were what you suspect a truth—do you design to keep your daughter a virgin till you find a man unblemished that way?

Mr. Seal. Sir, as much a cit as you take me for, I know the town and the world; and give me leave to say, that we merchants are a species of gentry that have grown into the world this last century, and are as honorable, and almost as useful, as you landed folks, that have always thought yourselves so much above us; for your trading, forsooth, is extended no farther than a load of hay or a fat ox. You are pleasant people, indeed, because you are generally bred up to be lazy; therefore, I warrant you, industry is dishonorable.

Sir J. Bev. Be not offended, sir; let us go back to our point.

Mr. Seal. Oh! not at all offended; but I don't love to leave any part of the account unclosed. Look you, Sir John, comparisons are odious, and more particularly so on occasions of this kind, when we are projecting races that are to be made out of both sides of the comparisons.

Sir J. Bev. But, my son, sir, is, in the eye of the world, a gentleman of merit.

Mr. Seal. I own to you, I think him so.—But, Sir John, I am a man exercised and experienced in chances and disasters. I lost, in my earlier years, a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant. This makes me, perhaps, over cautious to preserve the second bounty of Providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this child. You'll pardon me, my poor girl, sir, is as valuable to me as your boasted son to you.

Sir J. Bev. Why, that's one very good

reason, Mr. Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

Mr. Seal. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this *incognita,* that can be objected to him. Here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

Sir J. Bev. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

Mr. Seal. Very wise men have been so enslaved; and, when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, whether moved from the demand of the world or slighter reasons, such a husband soils with his wife for a month perhaps—then good be w'ye, madam, the show's over—Ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,—

"And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is."

Now, in plain terms, sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turned a-grazing, and that must be the case when——

Sir J. Bev. But pray consider, sir, my son——

Mr. Seal. Look you, sir, I'll make the matter short. This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him; but, one way or other, he is, or has been, certainly engaged to her. I am therefore resolved, this very afternoon, to visit her. Now from her behavior, or appearance, I shall soon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

Sir J. Bev. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing inquired into relating to my son, that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

Mr. Seal. I hope that as sincerely as you believe it.—Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied, in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall wish your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain; and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir J. Bev. He is gone in a way but barely civil; but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heiress of it, are not to be lost for a little peevishness.

Enter Humphry.

Oh! Humphry, you are come in a seasonable minute. I want to talk to thee, and to tell thee that my head and heart are on the rack about my son.

Humph. Sir, you may trust his discretion; I am sure you may.

Sir J. Bev. Why, I do believe I may, and yet I'm in a thousand fears when I lay this vast wealth before me; when I consider his prepossessions, either generous to a folly, in an honorable love, or abandoned, past redemption, in a vicious one; and, from the one or the other, his insensibility to the fairest prospect towards doubling our estate: a father, who knows how useful wealth is, and how necessary, even to those who despise it—I say a father, Humphry, a father cannot bear it.

Humph. Be not transported, sir; you will grow incapable of taking any resolution in your perplexity.

Sir J. Bev. Yet, as angry as I am with him, I would not have him surprised in anything. This mercantile rough man may go grossly into the examination of this matter, and talk to the gentlewoman so as to——

Humph. No, I hope, not in an abrupt manner.

Sir J. Bev. No, I hope not! Why, dost thou know anything of her, or of him, or of anything of it, or all of it?

Humph. My dear master, I know so much that I told him this very day you had reason to be secretly out of humor about her.

Sir J. Bev. Did you go so far? Well, what said he to that?

Humph. His words were, looking upon me steadfastly: "Humphry," says he, "that woman is a woman of honor."

Sir J. Bev. How! Do you think he is married to her, or designs to marry her?

Humph. I can say nothing to the latter; but he says he can marry no one without your consent while you are living.

Sir J. Bev. If he said so much, I know he scorns to break his word with me.

Humph. I am sure of that.

Sir J. Bev. You are sure of that—well! that's some comfort. Then I have nothing to do but to see the bottom of this matter during this present ruffle—Oh, Humphry——

Humph. You are not ill, I hope, sir.

Sir J. Bev. Yes, a man is very ill that's in a very ill-humor. To be a father is to be in care for one whom you oftener disoblige than please by that very care—Oh! that sons could know the duty to a father before they themselves are fathers—But, perhaps, you'll say now that I am one of the happiest fathers in the world; but, I assure you, that of the very happiest is not a condition to be envied.

Humph. Sir, your pain arises, not from the thing itself, but your particular sense of it. You are overfond, nay, give me leave to say, you are unjustly apprehensive from your fondness. My master Bevil never disobliged you, and he will, I know he will, do everything you ought to expect.

Sir J. Bev. He won't take all this money with this girl—For ought I know, he will, forsooth, have so much moderation as to think he ought not to force his liking for any consideration.

Humph. He is to marry her, not you; he is to live with her, not you, sir.

Sir J. Bev. I know not what to think. But, I know, nothing can be more miserable than to be in this doubt—Follow me; I must come to some resolution. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Bevil, Jun.'s *Lodgings.*

Enter Tom *and* Phillis.

Tom. Well, madam, if you must speak with Mr. Myrtle, you shall; he is now with my master in the library.

Phil. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present, nor I so handsomely take anything from him before you; it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent, indeed, for me to retire, and leave my mistress with another man.

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly.

Tom. I believe so; but, however, I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to trust you. I'll call him to you. [*Exit* Tom.

Phil. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr. Myrtle from mere punctilio! I could, any hour of the day, get her to her lover, and would do it—but she, forsooth, will allow no plot to get him; but, if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it. I must, therefore, do her an acceptable violence, and surprise her into his arms. I am sure I go by the best rule imaginable. If she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.

Enter Myrtle *and* Tom.

Oh sir! You and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and no attempt to set her at liberty, or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton.

Myrt. Tom has been telling——But what is to be done?

Phil. What is to be done—when a man can't come at his mistress! Why, can't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

Myrt. How, Mrs. Phillis?

Phil. Ay; let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am obliged to you, madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love? Oh! were I a man——

Myrt. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once what, one time or other, you may be, and wish to be, or must be.

Myrt. Dear girl, talk plainly to me, and consider I, in my condition, can't be in very good humor—you say, to be at once what I must be.

Phil. Ay, ay; I mean no more than to be an old man; I saw you do it very well at the masquerade. In a word, old Sir Geoffry Cimberton is every hour expected in town, to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr. Cimberton. He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; though, as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come to the business, and don't keep the gentleman in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

Phil. I saw you at the masquerade act such a one to perfection. Go, and put on that very habit, and come to our house as Sir Geoffry. There is not one there but myself knows his person; I was born in the parish where he is Lord of the Manor. I have seen him often and often at church in the country. Do not hesitate, but come hither; they will think you bring a certain security against Mr. Myrtle, and you bring Mr. Myrtle. Leave the rest to me; I leave this with you, and expect—They don't, I told you, know you; they think you out of town, which you had as good be for ever, if you lose this opportunity—I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myrt. My dear Phillis!

[*Catches and kisses her, and gives her money.*

Phil. O fie! my kisses are not my own; you have committed violence; but I'll carry 'em to the right owner. [Tom *kisses her.*]—Come, see me downstairs [*To* Tom.], and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. [*Exeunt* Tom *and* Phillis.

Myrt. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient. The extravagance of it will make me less suspected, and it will give me opportunity to assert my own right to Lucinda, without whom I cannot live. But I am so mortified at this conduct of mine towards poor Bevil. He must think meanly of me—I know not how to reassume myself, and be in spirit enough for such an adventure as this; yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda under her present perplexities; and sure——

The next delight to transport, with the fair,
Is to relieve her in her hours of care.

[*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH

SCENE I

SEALAND'S *House.*

Enter PHILLIS, *with lights, before* MYRTLE, *disguised like old* SIR GEOFFRY; *supported by* MRS. SEALAND, LUCINDA, *and* CIMBERTON.

Mrs. Seal. Now I have seen you thus far, Sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation? [*Exit* MRS. SEAL.

Myrt. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old; and as it is incumbent on you to keep up our name and family, I shall, upon very reasonable terms, join with you in a settlement to that purpose. Though I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house.

Luc. Deuce on 'em! am I a merchant because my father is? [*Aside.*

Myrt. But is he directly a trader at this time?

Cimb. There's no hiding the disgrace, sir; he trades to all parts of the world.

Myrt. We never had one of our family before who descended from persons that did anything.

Cimb. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honor of my family, willing to take it in again, and to sink her into our name, and no harm done.

Myrt. 'Tis prudently and generously resolved—Is this the young thing?

Cimb. Yes, sir.

Phil. Good madam, don't be out of humor, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance.—Hear them out. [*To* LUC.

Myrt. Can't I see her nearer? My eyes are but weak.

Phil. Beside, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice, I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. [*To* LUC. *Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you, and to see you nearer!—Approach, sir.

Myrt. By your leave, young lady. [*Puts on spectacles.*]—Cousin Cimberton! She has exactly that sort of neck and bosom for which my sister Gertrude was so much admired in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered anything in women below the chin.

Luc. [*Aside.*] What a very odd situation am I in! though I cannot but be diverted at the extravagance of their humors, equally unsuitable to their age—Chin, quotha—I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not. Ha! ha!

Myrt. Madam, I would not willingly offend, but I have a better glass.

[*Pulls out a large one.*

Enter PHILLIS.

Phil. [*To* CIMBERTON.] Sir, my lady desires to show the apartment to you that she intends for Sir Geoffry.

Cimb. Well, sir! by that time you have sufficiently gazed and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there.—I will wait on you again. [*Exit* CIMB. *and* PHIL.

Myrt. Were it not, madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, though we are alone, which I would say more safe from being heard.

Luc. There is something in this old fellow, methinks, that raises my curiosity.

[*Aside.*

Myrt. To be free, madam, I as heartily contemn this kinsman of mine as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted by your parents to so insensible a possessor.

Luc. Surprising!—I hope, then, sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous as to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

Myrt. This hand of mine shall never be employed to sign anything against your good and happiness.

Luc. I am sorry, sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments; but there is a gentleman in the world whose gratitude will, I am sure, be worthy of the favor.

Myrt. All the thanks I desire, madam, are in your power to give.

Luc. Name them and command them.

Myrt. Only, madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover, you will, with open arms, receive him.

Luc. As willingly as his heart could wish it.

Myrt. Thus, then, he claims your promise. O Lucinda!

Luc. Oh! a cheat! a cheat! a cheat!

Myrt. Hush! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover, Myrtle himself, madam.

Luc. O bless me! what a rashness and folly to surprise me so—But hush—my mother.

Enter MRS. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, *and* PHILLIS.

Mrs. Seal. How now! what's the matter?

Luc. O madam! as soon as you left the room my uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cried out for help to support him and conduct him to his chamber.

Mrs. Seal. That was kindly done! Alas! sir, how do you find yourself?

Myrt. Never was taken in so odd a way

in my life—pray lead me! Oh! I was talking here—(pray carry me)—to my cousin Cimberton's young lady.

Mrs. Seal. [*Aside.*] My cousin Cimberton's young lady! How zealous he is, even in his extremity, for the match! A right Cimberton.

[CIMBERTON *and* LUCINDA *lead him, as one in pain.*

Cimb. Pox! Uncle, you will pull my ear off.

Luc. Pray, uncle! you will squeeze me to death.

Mrs. Seal. No matter, no matter—he knows not what he does.—Come, sir, shall I help you out?

Myrt. By no means! I'll trouble nobody but my young cousins here.

[*They lead him off.*

Phil. But pray, madam, does your ladyship intend that Mr. Cimberton shall really marry my young mistress at last? I don't think he likes her.

Mrs. Seal. That's not material! Men of his speculation are above desires—but be it as it may. Now I have given old Sir Geoffry the trouble of coming up to sign and seal, with what countenance can I be off?

Phil. As well as with twenty others, madam. It is the glory and honor of a great fortune to live in continual treaties, and still to break off: it looks great, madam.

Mrs. Seal. True, Phillis—yet to return our blood again into the Cimbertons is an honor not to be rejected—But were not you saying that Sir John Bevil's creature, Humphry, has been with Mr. Sealand?

Phil. Yes, madam; I overheard them agree that Mr. Sealand should go himself and visit this unknown lady that Mr. Bevil is so great with; and if he found nothing there to fright him, that Mr. Bevil should still marry my young mistress.

Mrs. Seal. How! nay, then, he shall find she is my daughter as well as his. I'll follow him this instant, and take the whole family along with me. The disputed power of disposing of my own daughter shall be at an end this very night. I'll live no longer in anxiety for a little hussy that hurts my appearance wherever I carry her: and for whose sake I seem to be at all regarded, and that in the best of my days.

Phil. Indeed, madam, if she were married, your ladyship might very well be taken for Mr. Sealand's daughter.

Mrs. Seal. Nay, when the chit has not been with me, I have heard the men say as much. I'll no longer cut off the greatest pleasure of a woman's life (the shining in assemblies) by her forward anticipation of the respect that's due to her superior. She shall down to Cimberton-Hall—she shall—she shall.

Phil. I hope, madam, I shall stay with your ladyship.

Mrs. Seal. Thou shalt, Phillis, and I'll place thee then more about me—But order chairs immediately; I'll be gone this minute.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Charing Cross.

Enter MR. SEALAND *and* HUMPHRY.

Mr. Seal. I am very glad, Mr. Humphry, that you agree with me that it is for our common good I should look thoroughly into this matter.

Humph. I am, indeed, of that opinion; for there is no artifice, nothing concealed, in our family, which ought in justice to be known. I need not desire you, sir, to treat the lady with care and respect.

Mr. Seal. Master Humphry, I shall not be rude, though I design to be a little abrupt, and come into the matter at once, to see how she will bear upon a surprise.

Humph. That's the door, sir; I wish you success.—[*While* HUMPHRY *speaks,* SEALAND *consults his table book.*]—I am less concerned what happens there, because I hear Mr. Myrtle is well lodged as old Sir Geoffry; so I am willing to let this gentleman employ himself here, to give them time at home; for I am sure 'tis necessary for the quiet of our family Lucinda were disposed of out of it, since Mr. Bevil's inclination is so much otherwise engaged. [*Exit.*

Mr. Seal. I think this is the door. [*Knocks.*] I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to inquire, though I make an errand, to begin discourse. [*Knocks again, and enter a foot-boy.*] So, young man! is your lady within?

Boy. Alack, sir! I am but a country boy—I dant know whether she is or noa; but an you'll stay a bit, I'll goa and ask the gentlewoman that's with her.

Mr. Seal. Why, sirrah, though you are a country boy, you can see, can't you? You know whether she is at home, when you see her, don't you?

Boy. Nay, nay, I'm not such a country lad neither, master, to think she's at home because I see her. I have been in town but a month, and I lost one place already for believing my own eyes.

Mr. Seal. Why, sirrah! have you learnt to lie already?

Boy. Ah, master! things that are lies in the country are not lies at London. I begin to know my business a little better than so—But an you please to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you that can tell you for certain—she can make bold to ask my lady herself.

Mr. Seal. Oh! then, she is within, I find, though you dare not say so.

Boy. Nay, nay! that's neither here nor there: what's matter whether she is within or no, if she has not a mind to see anybody?

Mr. Seal. I can't tell, sirrah, whether you are arch or simple; but, however, get me a direct answer, and here's a shilling for you.

Boy. Will you please to walk in; I'll see what I can do for you.

Mr. Seal. I see you will be fit for your business in time, child; but I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in such a house.

Boy. Such a house! Sir, you han't seen it yet. Pray walk in.

Mr. Seal. Sir, I'll wait upon you.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Indiana's *House.*

Enter Isabella.

Isab. What anxiety do I feel for this poor creature! What will be the end of her? Such a languishing unreserved passion for a man that at last must certainly leave or ruin her! and perhaps both! Then the aggravation of the distress is, that she does not believe he will—not but, I must own, if they are both what they would seem, they are made for one another, as much as Adam and Eve were, for there is no other of their kind but themselves.

Enter Boy.

So, Daniel! what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below would speak with my lady.

Isab. Sirrah! don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day, and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Isab. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before. Well! be it who it will, let him come up to me.

[*Exit Boy; and re-enters with* Mr. Sealand; Isabella *looks amazed.*

Mr. Seal. Madam, I can't blame your being a little surprised to see a perfect stranger make a visit, and——

Isab. I am indeed surprised!—I see he does not know me. [*Aside.*

Mr. Seal. You are very prettily lodged here, madam; in troth you seem to have everything in plenty—A thousand a year, I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them.

[*Aside, and looking about.*

Isab. [*Apart.*] Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty than of a girl of fourteen—he's almost still the same; but alas! I find, by other men, as well as himself, I am not what I was. As soon as he spoke, I was convinced 'twas he; how shall I contain my surprise and satisfaction! He must not know me yet.

Mr. Seal. Madam, I hope I don't give you any disturbance; but there is a young lady here with whom I have a particular business to discourse, and I hope she will admit me to that favor.

Isab. Why, sir, have you had any notice concerning her? I wonder who could give it you.

Mr. Seal. That, madam, is fit only to be communicated to herself.

Isab. Well, sir! you shall see her.—[*Aside.*] I find he knows nothing yet, nor shall from me. I am resolved I will observe this interlude, this sport of nature and of fortune.—You shall see her presently, sir; for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you. [*Exit.*

Mr. Seal. As a mother! right; that's the old phrase for one of those commode ladies, who lend out beauty for hire to young gentlemen that have pressing occasions. But here comes the precious lady herself. In troth a very sightly woman——

Enter Indiana.

Ind. I am told, sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Mr. Seal. Yes, madam, there came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr. Bevil, which is payable to-morrow; and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desired me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

Ind. Sir! was that necessary?

Mr. Seal. No, madam; but to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

Ind. Too well known to have for me! Your sober appearance, sir, which my friend described, made me expect no rudeness, or absurdity, at least—Who's there?—Sir, if you pay the money to a servant, 'twill be as well.

Mr. Seal. Pray, madam, be not offended; I came hither on an innocent, nay, a virtuous design; and, if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in a friendship with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

Ind. You make me hope, sir, I have mistaken you. I am composed again; be free, say on—[*Aside.*]—what I am afraid to hear.

Mr. Seal. I feared, indeed, an unwarranted passion here, but I did not think it was in

abuse of so worthy an object, so accomplished a lady as your sense and mien bespeak; but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify——

Ind. Sir, you are going into very great errors; but as you are pleased to say you see something in me that has changed at least the color of your suspicions, so has your appearance altered mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concerned you to inquire into my affairs and character.

Mr. Seal. How sensibly, with what an air she talks!

Ind. Good sir, be seated, and tell me tenderly; keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless—— [*Weeping.*] But I beg your pardon; though I am an orphan, your child is not; and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither.—I'll be composed; pray go on, sir.

Mr. Seal. How could Mr. Bevil be such a monster, to injure such a woman?

Ind. No, sir, you wrong him; he has not injured me. My support is from his bounty.

Mr. Seal. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful.

Ind. Still, still you will persist in that error. But my own fears tell me all. You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is designed a husband by his good father, and he has, perhaps, consented to the overture. He was here this morning, dressed beyond his usual plainness—nay, most sumptuously—and he is to be, perhaps, this night a bridegroom.

Mr. Seal. I own he was intended such; but, madam, on your account, I have determined to defer my daughter's marriage till I am satisfied from your own mouth of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, sir; his eyes have only made me think he designed to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanor made me misinterpret all. 'Twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me; he never made one amorous advance to me. His large heart, and bestowing hand, have only helped the miserable; nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care and the object on which to indulge and please himself with pouring favors.

Mr. Seal. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am methinks afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing as if we had talked never so distinctly——he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him. Let not me, miserable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor. No, sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues. If to bestow without a prospect of return; if to delight in supporting what might, perhaps, be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested; if these actions, sir, can in a careful parent's eye commend him to a daughter, give yours, sir, give her to my honest, generous Bevil. What have I to do but sigh, and weep, to rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains, or, hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts and broken accents my strange, strange story!

Mr. Seal. Take comfort, madam.

Ind. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and shrieking to demand of fate why—why was I born to such variety of sorrows.

Mr. Seal. If I have been the least occasion——

Ind. No, 'twas Heaven's high will I should be such; to be plundered in my cradle! tossed on the seas! and even there an infant captive! to lose my mother, hear but of my father! to be adopted! lose my adopter! then plunged again into worse calamities!

Mr. Seal. An infant captive!

Ind. Yet then, to find the most charming of mankind, once more to set me free from what I thought the last distress, to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favors; to support my very life in a way that stole, at the same time, my very soul itself from me.

Mr. Seal. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

Ind. Yet then, again, this very man to take another! without leaving me the right, the pretence of easing my fond heart with tears! For, oh! I can't reproach him, though the same hand that raised me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

Mr. Seal. Dear lady! Oh, yet one moment's patience: my heart grows full with your affliction.—But yet there's something in your story that——

Ind. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

Mr. Seal. Do not think so. Pray answer me: does Bevil know your name and family?

Ind. Alas! too well! Oh, could I be any other thing than what I am——I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little orna-

ments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been——

[*In her disorder she throws away a bracelet, which* Sealand *takes up, and looks earnestly on it.*

Mr. Seal. Ha! what's this? My eyes are not deceived! It is, it is the same! the very bracelet which I bequeathed to my wife at our last mournful parting.

Ind. What said you, sir? Your wife? Whither does my fancy carry me? What means this unfelt motion at my heart? And yet, again my fortune but deludes me; for if I err not, sir, your name is Sealand; but my lost father's name was——

Mr. Seal. Danvers; was it not?

Ind. What new amazement? That is, indeed, my family.

Mr. Seal. Know, then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious now to mention, I changed my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Enter Isabella.

Isab. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face (yours, sir, I well remember), gaze on and read in me your sister, Isabella.

Mr. Seal. My sister!

Isab. But here's a claim more tender yet——your Indiana, sir, your long-lost daughter.

Mr. Seal. Oh, my child! my child!

Ind. All gracious Heaven! is it possible! do I embrace my father?

Mr. Seal. And do I hold thee?—These passions are too strong for utterance. Rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way. —Oh, my sister! [*Embracing her.*

Isab. Now, dearest niece, my groundless fears, my painful cares no more shall vex thee. If I have wronged thy noble lover with too hard suspicions, my just concern for thee, I hope, will plead my pardon.

Mr. Seal. Oh! make him, then, the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy. Fly this instant! tell him all these wondrous turns of Providence in his favor! Tell him I have now a daughter to bestow which he no longer will decline; that this day he still shall be a bridegroom; nor shall a fortune, the merit which his father seeks, be wanting. Tell him the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit* Isab.] My dearest Indiana!

[*Turns and embraces her.*

Ind. Have I, then, at last, a father's sanction on my love? His bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

Mr. Seal. Oh, my child! how are our sorrows past o'erpaid by such a meeting! Though I have lost so many years of soft paternal dalliance with thee, yet, in one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness, is ample, ample reparation!—And yet, again, the merit of thy lover——

Ind. Oh! had I spirits left to tell you of his actions! how strongly filial duty has suppressed his love; and how concealment still has doubled all his obligations; the pride, the joy of his alliance, sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquered mine.

Mr. Seal. How laudable is love when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him——

Ind. See, sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Enter Isabella, *with* Sir John Bevil, Bevil, Jun., Mrs. Sealand, Cimberton, Myrtle, *and* Lucinda.

Sir J. Bev. [*Entering.*] Where, where's this scene of wonder? Mr. Sealand, I congratulate, on this occasion, our mutual happiness ——Your good sister, sir, has, with the story of your daughter's fortune, filled us with surprise and joy. Now all exceptions are removed; my son has now avowed his love, and turned all former jealousies and doubts to approbation; and, I am told, your goodness has consented to reward him.

Mr. Seal. If, sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

Bev. Jun. I hear your mention, sir, of fortune, with pleasure only as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love. Let him be provident, but let me be happy.—My ever-destined, my acknowledged wife! [*Embracing* Indiana.

Ind. Wife! Oh, my ever loved! My lord! my master!

Sir J. Bev. I congratulate myself, as well as you, that I had a son who could, under such disadvantages, discover your great merit.

Mr. Seal. Oh, Sir John! how vain, how weak is human prudence! What care, what foresight, what imagination could contrive such blest events, to make our children happy, as Providence in one short hour has laid before us?

Cimb. [*To* Mrs. Sealand.] I am afraid, madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too busy for our affair. If you please, we'll take another opportunity.

Mrs. Seal. Let us have patience, sir.

Cimb. But we make Sir Geoffry wait, madam.

Myrt. O, sir, I am not in haste.

[*During this,* Bev., Jun. *presents* Lucinda *to* Indiana.

Mr. Seal. But here! here's our general benefactor! Excellent young man, that could

be at once a lover to her beauty and a parent to her virtue.

Bev. Jun. If you think that an obligation, sir, give me leave to overpay myself, in the only instance that can now add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this lady on Mr. Myrtle.

Mr. Seal. She is his without reserve; I beg he may be sent for. Mr. Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent, yet there is, since I last saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cimb. I hope, sir, your lady has concealed nothing from me?

Mr. Seal. Troth, sir, nothing but what was concealed from myself—another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

Cimb. How, Mr. Sealand? Why, then, if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you can't say that any of my estate is settled upon her. I was in treaty for the whole; but if that is not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain. Sir, I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady, my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myrt. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart. [*Discovers himself.*

All. Mr. Myrtle!

Myrt. And I beg pardon of the whole company that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffry, only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her; which, if her parents will ratify, as they once favored my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

Luc. Generous man!

Mr. Seal. If, sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who as meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

Luc. Mr. Myrtle, though you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more, because I bring you less.

Myrt. We have much more than we want; and I am glad any event has contributed to the discovery of our real inclinations to each other.

Mrs. Seal. Well! however, I'm glad the girl's disposed of, anyway. [*Aside.*

Bev. Myrtle, no longer rivals now, but brothers!

Myrt. Dear Bevil, you are born to triumph over me! but now our competition ceases; I rejoice in the pre-eminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. Bev. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example: your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit; and the several difficulties you have struggled with evidently show—

Whate'er the generous mind itself denies,
The secret care of Providence supplies.

[*Exeunt.*

JOHN GAY

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

JOHN GAY, the author of *The Beggar's Opera* and many things beside, holds a place all his own among English men of letters. Pope, who knew and loved him well—to know Gay was to love him—summed up the man's whole story in one antithetic phrase, "In wit a man, simplicity a child;" for it is true that Gay never grew up. To the day of his death in his middle forties he was as irresponsible, as lazy and slovenly, as immoderate in his meat and drink, and altogether as helplessly dependent upon the guidance and care of others as any grammar-school urchin. All life and work were his playground, and his many friends guarded and encouraged him in his clever play, just as protecting grown-ups watch over careless childhood at sport. Gay's alternate buoyancy and depression, delight and despair, are the happiness and sorrow of a child plunging from dizzy heights to depths. But fortunately for us, whatever wails may have risen to heaven, when Gay deemed himself neglected, little of this juvenile lamentation creeps into his work. In his best poetry he is unalloyed joy.

Of Gay's early years there is little to tell. Born in 1685 of a Devonshire family of longer pedigree than purses, he received his only education at the school of his native town of Barnstaple, from which he bore away some knowledge of the classics. Then there were days of idle apprenticeship to a London silk mercer, followed by a long period leisurely given by the youth to seeking in taverns and coffee-houses the company of the great, so easily accessible in that age, and to merrily inviting whatever of soul was in him. By the time he was thirty he had found both his fellows and himself. Bolingbroke, Swift, Arbuthnot, and Pope were now his loyal friends, and the Duchess of Monmouth had taken him into her service. He had wandered unintelligently enough within the circle of Chaucer's magic in his unsuccessful comedy of 1713, *The Wife of Bath*. He had caught and held the ear of the town with two poems of country life, *Rural Sports*, which Dr. Johnson deemed "never contemptible and never excellent," and that delightful burlesque, *The Shepherd's Week*, a culminating contribution to Pope's pastoral war with Ambrose Philips. He had won, too, the favor of the great, and accompanied as secretary Lord Clarendon on a diplomatic mission to the Court of Hanover in 1714. Then with the death of Queen Anne, while Gay was still abroad, seemed to come the end of all his hopes. But our disappointed poet,—

unlike his friend, Swift, eating out his heart in exile—does not attain to the dignity of a tragic figure. Indeed, Gay's description of his dramatic burlesque of the year 1715, *The What d'ye Call It*—in which, by the way, he had his laugh at *Cato* and *Venice Preserved*—as a "tragi-comi-pastoral farce" applies pretty well to his own life at this time. His distress over his lack of employment and his empty pockets affects us like the passing grief of childhood, for we know that friends will be kind and that skies will clear. Pope, who has aided him in his satire, cordially bids him to Binfield or to Twickenham, Burlington plays the host in Piccadilly and at English watering places, Pulteney carries him off for a season to Aix-la-Chapelle, Harcourt lends him a house in Oxfordshire. His loudly bewailed martyrdom assumes the form of an agreeable dependence.

Though over-easy in his life, Gay seems, as a writer, always quick enough to catch the moment with play, tale, eclogue, epistle, or song. *Trivia: or The Art of Walking the Streets of London,* published early in 1716, brings to bear upon the metropolis the same humorous observation that he earlier cast upon his Devonshire countryside. *Three Hours after Marriage,* written with Pope in 1717, may have deservedly failed with audience and critics, but it lined Gay's purse. And in 1720 his collected poems pranced forth with a dazzling subscription list of all the noblesse. The thousand pounds, thus easily won, were as easily lost with the pricking of the South Sea bubble. Still what does it all matter? Providence kindly interposes with the sinecure of a lottery commissionship and with a dispensation, of far more value to the improvident poet than a salary of £150, the friendship of the Duke of Queensberry and his brilliant Duchess. His tragedy of indifferent merit, *The Captives* (1724), with Wilks, Booth, Mrs. Porter, and Mrs. Oldfield in the chief rôles, was applauded not only by all London, but by royalty itself. The next year finds Gay writing for young Prince William, afterwards the bloody Duke of Cumberland, a series of Fables, which did more for the poet's fame than all his other works combined. And deservedly so, for the charming simplicity and graceful verse of these little productions, which are so much more than mere imitations of Lafontaine and Lamotte, make a natural appeal to the world of childhood and their social applications interest many older readers. It was doubtless as a fabulist that Gay was offered in 1727 the position of gentleman-usher to little Princess Louisa, which he, playing the grown man for the nonce, loftily declined as undignified. This disappointment must have been speedily forgotten in the tremendous vogue of the very work that it provoked, Gay's delightful satire against courts and ministers, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728). Its sequel of the same year, *Polly,* though denied the stage by the Lord Chancellor, prospered mightily in print. Duchesses rallied about him in his luxurious rôle of political martyr and the Queensberrys deserted the court for the sake of their protégé. He became, as Arbuthnot tells us, "the darling of the city."

The rest of Gay's story is but anticlimax; for during the four years

remaining to him he produced nothing of great note. An opera, *Achilles*, a pastoral drama, *Acis and Galatea*, and a few fables prove that he was not altogether idle. The end came suddenly at the Queensberry town house on December 5, 1732. Upon the splendid monument which marks Gay's resting-place in the Poets' Corner of Westminster appear Pope's epitaph and his own flippant couplet:—

"Life is a jest, and all things show it.
I thought so once, and now I know it."

Our concern is with but a single work of Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*. No other account of the conception and presentation of this great popular success can compare with that of Pope in Spence's *Anecdotes:* "Dr. Swift had been observing once to Mr. Gay, what an odd pretty sort of thing a Newgate Pastoral might make. Gay was inclined to try at such a thing for some time; but afterwards thought it would be better to write a comedy on the same plan. This was what gave rise to *The Beggar's Opera*. He began on it; and when he first mentioned it to Swift, the Doctor did not much like the project. As he carried it on, he showed what he wrote to both of us, and we now and then gave a correction, or a word or two of advice; but it was wholly of his own writing. When it was done, neither of us thought that it would succeed. We showed it to Congreve, who, after reading it over, said: 'It would either take greatly or be damned confoundedly.' We were all, at the first night of it, in great uncertainty of the event; till we heard the Duke of Argyll, who sat in the next box to us, say: 'It will do, it must do! I see it in the eyes of them.' This was a good while before the first act was over, and gave us ease soon; for the Duke (besides his own good taste) has a particular knack, as any one now living, in discovering the taste of the public. He was quite right in this, as usual; the good nature of audience appeared stronger and stronger every act, and ended in a clamor of applause." Never was a triumph more complete. The play, as wags declared, "made Gay rich and Rich (the theatre manager) gay." A run of sixty-three days in the metropolis was followed by a brilliant progress through the provinces. The best of its many songs appeared on screens and fans. Macheath, wavering between Polly and Lucy, was painted several times by Hogarth. Lavinia Fenton, who played the rôle of Polly, now reigned as universal favorite and later married her duke. "Furthermore"—Pope is speaking—"the piece drove out of England (for that season) the Italian Opera, which had carried all before it for ten years."

That it was Gay's deliberate purpose to burlesque the Italian Opera, which had dominated the musical stage of England not for a decade, but for a generation (see *The Spectator*, Nos. 5, 13, 18), seems most unlikely, for his production bears no relation to this exotic in subject, style, or form. But that the success of the innovation temporarily impaired the vogue of such

composers as Handel and Buononcini cannot be questioned. Gay created, or rather, derived from the masque through the "heroic" opera a popular form of drama, the ballad opera, which seemed to Johnson fifty years later "likely to keep long possession of the stage" and which found its high-water mark in *The Duenna* of Sheridan. The chief contrast between the eighteenth-century ballad opera and the comic opera, let us say, of Gilbert and Sullivan lies in this, that in Gay's invention the music holds a so much less important place than the prose dialogue that the numerous songs, which are set to popular airs, are introduced into the middle of the scenes and could all be omitted without spoiling the plot. Indeed, Walker, the first impersonator of Macheath, "knew no more of music than barely singing in tune; but then his singing was supported by inimitable action, by his speaking to the eye and charming the ear." Lavinia Fenton's acknowledged position as "Queen of English Song" must, however, have contributed greatly to the success of the opera.

That Gay derived either the characters or plot of *The Beggar's Opera* from any earlier drama is not demonstrated by any evidence yet presented. The charge of contemporaries that he stole from *The Dutch Courtezan* of John Marston through *The Woman's Revenge* (1715) of Christopher Bullock is as unsupported as the assertion of modern scholarship that he was deeply indebted to Richard Brome's *Merry Beggars* (1641). Here or there we meet a seeming reminiscence of these forerunners, but the borrowing, if such it be, is probably unconscious. And the occasional parallels with famous comedies of both sides of the Channel, pointed out by German source-hunters, are sheer coincidences. The inspiration of Gay's dramatic burlesque lay not in books but in life. He found the prototypes of his chief figures in the "underworld" of his time. The original of Peachum was the great Napoleon of the realms of crime in the eighteenth century, Jonathan Wilde, afterwards Fielding's hero—spy, fence, and thief—who, but three years before, had been hanged at Tyburn. And probably Macheath's model was the equally notorious Jack Sheppard, burglar and highwayman, who, since his very recent death, had become dramatic material at both Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields,—a full century before Harrison Ainsworth celebrated his exploits.

Gay was, however, striking at loftier game than wretched footpads and runagates. The corruption that everywhere flaunted in high places is the real object of his attack and the chief apostle of bribery, the prime minister himself, is constantly the butt of thinly veiled satire. Every one, of course, instantly recognized in Robin of Bagshot, alias Bluff Bob, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty, the allusions to Sir Robert Walpole's rough manners, roaring conviviality, and unblushing incursions upon the public purse, and all construed the quarrel between Peachum and Lockit as a picture of the strife between Walpole and Townshend. But those who went farther and sought to interpret Macheath's shameless career as a complete allegory of the private

life and public service of the unscrupulous but efficient premier, or who tried to read into the unsavory records of the other rogues of the piece the stories of certain noble lords, surely exaggerated the dramatist's design. Through slashing side-strokes at "Bob, the poet's foe," Gay doubtless aimed to settle scores for his long neglect at the hands of government. Walpole displayed sufficient presence of mind to lead the applause at these sallies, as Bolingbroke had done during the performance of *Cato;* but he evidently had small relish for the rôle of stage highwayman, if we are right in assuming that the suppression of Gay's sequel, *Polly,* was achieved through his powerful influence.

The charge brought against *The Beggar's Opera* by Dr. Herring, Archbishop of Canterbury, and echoed by a man so different as Daniel Defoe, that the play "taught thieves to value themselves on their profession rather than be ashamed of it by making a highwayman the hero and dismissing him at last unpunished" was repeated in a later age by Justice Fielding, who feared its tendency "to increase the number of thieves." To us the accusation seems as absurd as the commendation of the piece by Swift on the ground that it "placed all kinds of vice in the strongest and most odious light." After these extremes one welcomes the sound judgment of Johnson that "the play was not likely to do either good or evil, as it was written solely to divert." And divert it does still. The modern reader, undisturbed by any fear of highwaymen, untroubled by any old-fashioned sense of poetic justice, and heedless of political allusion, can afford to laugh at old scruples.

Yet no play in this volume suffers more through transference from stage to closet than *The Beggar's Opera.* Macheath in the glow of action, especially when impersonated by a vigorous actor, might easily delight audiences —as indeed he did for over a century and a half (until 1920-1)—with his riotous gaiety and ready song; but Macheath in cold print seems so mean a liar and so cruel a rake, so utterly devoid of any sign of grace or generosity, that we feel little sympathy with his knavery. Lucy, "bamboozled and bit," must ever give more pain than pleasure. And Polly, convincing though she may have been in Lavinia Fenton's charming portrayal, and in the skilful interpretation of many generations of great actresses, is morally as impossible in her Newgate environment as on the tropical island of the sequel that bears her name. And the other women of Macheath's troop are not the mere "filles de joie" that their names and songs suggest, but sordid monsters. The Peachums, father and mother, and Lockit are the real triumphs of the piece. They are of the eternal fellowship of Defoe's thieves and of Dickens's dodgers in professional skill and grim humor. Nothing in the play equals in circumstantiality or outdoes in zest the enumeration of the gang and the inventory of their thefts. All this is delightfully, flagrantly realistic.

The merits of the plot are as obvious as its defects. Lively situations and unflagging movement sweep us on with a rush, and the repeated captures

and escapes of the highwayman are dextrously varied. The dialogue is always brisk and clever. But the motif that prompts the designs of the Peachums upon Macheath—disgust that he has legally married their daughter—is too slight and unconvincing to support much action. And the device of the reprieve, as the author himself frankly admits from the stage, is a concession to the town's desire for a happy ending. The dramatist's stage comment upon the fate of his puppets recalls the self-criticism of Mr. Bernard Shaw.

That Gay possessed the singing faculty to a degree surprising in his unmusical age had been many times attested in his earlier years. The reputation gained by such popular favorites as *'Twas When the Seas Were Roaring* and *Sweet William's Farewell* was now tremendously enhanced by the seventy lyrics of his ballad opera, of which all but a few were Gay's own. His use of native airs of wide popularity, Greensleeves, Lillebullero, Peg-a-Ramsey, Packington's Pound, Over the Hills and Far Away, and many more found in D'Urfey's *Pills* and other famous collections, contrasts most pleasantly with the introduction of Italian arias and French chansons into *Polly,* which approaches far more closely than its predecessor to the prevailing Italian vogue.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN		WOMEN	
Peachum.		Mrs. Peachum.	
Lockit.		Polly Peachum.	
Macheath.		Lucy Lockit.	
Filch.		Diana Trapes.	
Jemmy Twitcher,	Macheath's *Gang.*	Mrs. Coaxer,	*Women of the Town.*
Crook-finger'd Jack,		Dolly Trull,	
Wat Dreary,		Mrs. Vixen,	
Robin of Bagshot,		Betty Doxy,	
Nimming Ned,		Jenny Diver,	
Harry Padington,		Mrs. Slammekin,	
Matt of the Mint,		Suky Tawdry,	
Ben Budge,		Molly Brazen,	
Beggar.			
Player.			

Constables, Drawer, Turnkey, etc.

INTRODUCTION

BEGGAR, PLAYER

Beggar. If poverty be a title to poetry, I am sure nobody can dispute mine. I own myself of the company of beggars; and I make one at their weekly festivals at St. Giles's. I have a small yearly salary for my catches,

and am welcome to a dinner there whenever I please, which is more than most poets can say.

Player. As we live by the muses, 'tis but gratitude in us to encourage poetical merit wherever we find it. The muses, contrary to all other ladies, pay no distinction to dress, and never partially mistake the pertness of embroidery for wit, nor the modesty of want for dulness. Be the author who he will, we push his play as far as it will go. So (though you are in want) I wish you success heartily.

Beggar. This piece I own was originally writ for the celebrating the marriage of James Chanter and Moll Lay, two most excellent ballad-singers. I have introduced the similes that are in your celebrated Operas: the Swallow, the Moth, the Bee, the Ship, the Flower, etc. Besides, I have a prison-scene which the ladies always reckon charmingly pathetic. As to the parts, I have observed such a nice impartiality to our two ladies, that it is impossible for either of them to take offence. I hope I may be forgiven, that I have not made my Opera throughout unnatural, like those in vogue; for I have no recitative: excepting this, as I have consented to have neither prologue nor epilogue, it must be allowed an Opera in all its forms. The piece indeed hath been heretofore frequently presented by ourselves in our great room at St. Giles's, so that I cannot too often acknowledge your charity in bringing it now on the stage.

Player. But I see it is time for us to withdraw; the actors are preparing to begin. Play away the overture. [*Exeunt.*

ACT I

Scene I

Peachum's House.

Peachum *sitting at a table with a large book of accounts before him.*

Air I—*An old woman clothed in gray, etc.*

Through all the employments of life,
Each neighbor abuses his brother;
Whore and rogue they call husband and wife:
All professions be-rogue one another.
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat,
The lawyer be-knaves the divine;
And the statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his trade as honest as mine.

A lawyer is an honest employment, so is mine. Like me, too, he acts in a double capacity, both against rogues and for 'em; for 'tis but fitting that we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by them.

Scene II

Peachum, Filch.

Filch. **Sir, Black Moll hath sent word her trial comes on in the afternoon, and she hopes you will order matters so as to bring her off.**

Peach. **Why, she may plead her belly at worst; to my knowledge she hath taken care of that security. But as the wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her that I'll soften the evidence.**

Filch. **Tom Gagg, Sir, is found guilty.**

Peach. **A lazy dog! When I took him the time before, I told him what he would come to if he did not mend his hand. This is death without reprieve. I may venture to book him.** (*writes.*) **For Tom Gagg, forty pounds. Let Betty Sly know that I'll save her from transportation, for I can get more by her staying in England.**

Filch. **Betty hath brought more goods into our lock to-year, than any five of the gang; and in truth, 'tis a pity to lose so good a customer.**

Peach. **If none of the gang take her off, she may, in the common course of business, live a twelve-month longer. I love to let women scape. A good sportsman always lets the hen partridges fly, because the breed of the game depends upon them. Besides, here the law allows us no reward; there is nothing to be got by the death of women——except our wives.**

Filch. Without dispute, she is a fine woman! 'Twas to her I was obliged for my education, and (to say a bold word) she had trained up more young fellows to the business than the gaming-table.

Peach. Truly, Filch, thy observation is right. We and the surgeons are more beholden to women than all the professions besides.

AIR II—*The bonny gray-eyed morn, etc.*

Filch.

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind,
By her we first were taught the wheedling arts;
Her very eyes can cheat; when most she's kind,
She tricks us of our money with our hearts.
For her, like wolves by night we roam for prey,
And practise ev'ry fraud to bribe her charms;
For suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
And beauty must be fee'd into our arms.

Peach. But make haste to Newgate, boy, and let my friends know what I intend; for I love to make them easy one way or other.

Filch. When a gentleman is long kept in suspense, penitence may break his spirit ever after. Besides, certainty gives a man a good air upon his trial, and makes him risk another without fear or scruple. But I'll away, for 'tis a pleasure to be the messenger of comfort to friends in affliction.

Scene III

PEACHUM.

Peach. But 'tis now high time to look about me for a decent execution against next sessions. I hate a lazy rogue, by whom one can get nothing till he is hanged. A register of the gang, (*reading*) "Crook-fingered Jack. A year and a half in the service." Let me see how much the stock owes to his industry; one, two, three, four, five gold watches, and seven silver ones. A mighty clean-handed fellow! Sixteen snuff-boxes, five of them of true gold. Six dozen of handkerchiefs, four silver-hilted swords, half a dozen of shirts, three tie-periwigs, and a piece of broadcloth. Considering these are only the fruits of his leisure hours, I don't know a prettier fellow, for no man alive hath a more engaging presence of mind upon the road. "Wat Dreary, alias Brown Will"—an irregular dog, who hath an underhand way of disposing of his goods. I'll try him only for a sessions or two longer upon his good behavior. "Harry Padington"—a poor petty-larceny rascal, without the least genius; that fellow, though he were to live these six months, will never come to the gallows with any credit. "Slippery Sam"—he goes off the next sessions, for the villain hath the impudence to have views of following his trade as a tailor, which he calls an honest employment. "Matt of the Mint"—listed not above a month ago, a promising sturdy fellow, and diligent in his way: somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good contributions on the public, if he does not cut himself short by murder. "Tom Tipple"—a guzzling soaking sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand. A cart is absolutely necessary for him. "Robin of Bagshot, alias Gorgon, alias Bob Bluff, alias Carbuncle, alias Bob Booty."

Scene IV

PEACHUM, MRS. PEACHUM.

Mrs. Peach. What of Bob Booty, husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him? You know, my dear, he's a favorite customer of mine. 'Twas he made me a present of this ring.

Peach. I have set his name down in the black list, that's all, my dear; he spends his life among women, and as soon as his money is gone, one or other of the ladies will hang him for the reward, and there's forty pound lost to us for ever.

Mrs. Peach. You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I always leave those affairs to you. Women indeed are bitter bad judges in these cases, for they are so partial to the brave, that they think every man handsome who is going to the camp or the gallows.

AIR III—*Cold and raw, etc.*

If any wench Venus's girdle wear,
Though she be never so ugly;
Lilies and roses will quickly appear,
And her face look wond'rous smugly.
Beneath the left ear so fit but a cord,
(A rope so charming a zone is!)
The youth in his cart hath the air of a lord,
And we cry, There dies an Adonis!

But really, husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer, braver set of men than at present. We have not had a murder among them all, these seven months. And truly, my dear, that is a great blessing.

Peach. What a dickens is the woman always a-whimp'ring about murder for? No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a gentleman do?

Mrs. Peach. If I am in the wrong, my dear, you must excuse me, for nobody can help the frailty of an over-scrupulous conscience.

Peach. Murder is as fashionable a crime as a man can be guilty of. How many fine gentlemen have we in Newgate every year, purely upon that article! If they have wherewithal to persuade the jury to bring it in manslaughter, what are they the worse for it? So, my dear, have done upon this subject. Was Captain Macheath here this morning, for the bank-notes he left with you last week?

Mrs. Peach. Yes, my dear; and though the bank has stopt payment, he was so cheerful and so agreeable! Sure there is not a finer gentleman upon the road than the captain! If he comes from Bagshot at any reasonable hour he hath promised to make one with Polly and me, and Bob Booty, at a party of quadrille. Pray, my dear, is the captain rich?

Peach. The captain keeps too good company ever to grow rich. Marybone and the chocolate-houses are his undoing. The man that proposes to get money by play should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth.

Mrs. Peach. Really, I am sorry upon Polly's account the captain hath not more discretion. What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

Peach. Upon Polly's account! What, a plague, does the woman mean?——Upon Polly's account!

Mrs. Peach. Captain Macheath is very fond of the girl.

Peach. And what then?

Mrs. Peach. If I have any skill in the ways of women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty man.

Peach. And what then? You would not be so mad to have the wench marry him! Gamesters and highwaymen are generally very good to their whores, but they are very devils to their wives.

Mrs. Peach. But if Polly should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself? Poor girl, I am in the utmost concern about her.

AIR IV—*Why is your faithful slave disdained? etc.*

If love the virgin's heart invade,
How, like a moth, the simple maid
Still plays about the flame!
If soon she be not made a wife,
Her honor's singed, and then, for life,
She's——what I dare not name.

Peach. Look ye, wife. A handsome wench in our way of business is as profitable as at the bar of a Temple coffee-house, who looks upon it as her livelihood to grant every liberty but one. You see I would indulge the girl as far as prudently we can—in any thing but marriage! After that, my dear, how shall we be safe? Are we not then in her husband's power? For a husband hath the absolute power over all a wife's secrets but her own. If the girl had the discretion of a court lady, who can have a dozen young fellows at her ear without complying with one, I should not matter it; but Polly is tinder, and a spark will at once set her on a flame. Married! If the wench does not know her own profit, sure she knows her own pleasure better than to make herself a property! My daughter to me should be, like a court lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang. Married! if the affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the example of our neighbors.

Mrs. Peach. Mayhap, my dear, you may injure the girl. She loves to imitate the fine ladies, and she may only allow the captain liberties in the view of interest.

Peach. But 'tis your duty, my dear, to warn the girl against her ruin, and to instruct her how to make the most of her beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the meantime, wife, rip out the coronets and marks of these dozen of cambric handkerchiefs, for I can dispose of them this afternoon to a chap in the city.

Scene V

Mrs. Peachum.

Mrs. Peach. Never was a man more out of the way in an argument than my husband! Why must our Polly, forsooth, differ from her sex, and love only her husband? And why must Polly's marriage, contrary to all observation, make her the less followed by other men? All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property.

AIR V—*Of all the simple things we do, etc.*

A maid is like the golden ore,
Which hath guineas intrinsical in't
Whose worth is never known, before
It is tried and imprest in the mint.
A wife's like a guinea in gold,
Stampt with the name of her spouse;
Now here, now there; is bought, or is sold;
And is current in every house.

Scene VI

Mrs. Peachum. Filch.

Mrs. Peach. Come hither, Filch. I am as fond of this child, as though my mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of thy life, I pronounce, boy, thou wilt be a great man in history. Where was your post last night, my boy?

Filch. I plied at the opera, madam; and considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great hurry in getting chairs and coaches, made a tolerable hand on't. These seven handkerchiefs, madam.

Mrs. Peach. Colored ones, I see. They are of sure sale from our warehouse at Redriff among the seamen.

Filch. And this snuff-box.

Mrs. Peach. Set in gold! A pretty encouragement this to a young beginner.

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming gold watch. Pox take the tailors for making the fobs so deep and narrow! It stuck by the way, and I was forced to make my escape under a coach. Really, madam, I fear, I shall be cut off in the flower of my youth, so that every now and then (since I was pumpt) I have thoughts of taking up and going to sea.

Mrs. Peach. You should go to Hockley in the Hole and to Marybone, child, to learn valor. These are the schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, boy, by this time, thou hadst lost fear as well as shame. Poor lad! how little does he know as yet of the Old Bailey! For the first fact I'll insure thee from being hanged; and going to sea, Filch, will come time enough upon a sentence of transportation. But now, since you have nothing better to do, ev'n go to your book, and learn your catechism; for really a man makes but an ill figure in the ordinary's paper, who cannot give a satisfactory answer to his questions. But, hark you, my lad. Don't tell me a lie; for you know I hate a liar. Do you know of anything that hath past between Captain Macheath and our Polly?

Filch. I beg you, madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a lie to you or to Miss Polly; for I promised her I would not tell.

Mrs. Peach. But when the honor of our family is concerned—

Filch. I shall lead a sad life with Miss Polly, if ever she come to know that I told you. Besides, I would not willingly forfeit my own honor by betraying anybody.

Mrs. Peach. Yonder comes my husband and Polly. Come, Filch, you shall go with me into my own room, and tell me the whole story. I'll give thee a most delicious glass of a cordial that I keep for my own drinking.

Scene VII

Peachum, Polly.

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a court or at an assembly. We have it in our natures, papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favor to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common.

air vi—*What shall I do to show how much I love her, etc.*

Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre,
Which in the garden enamels the ground;
Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy butterflies frolic around.
But, when once plucked, 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent-garden 'tis sent, (as yet sweet),
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,
Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

Peach. You know, Polly, I am not against your toying and trifling with a customer in the way of business, or to get out a secret, or so. But if I find out that you have played the fool and are married, you jade you, I'll cut your throat, hussy. Now you know my mind.

Scene VIII

Peachum, Polly, Mrs. Peachum.

air vii—*Oh London is a fine town.*

Mrs. Peachum *in a very great passion.*

Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we taught her.
I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!
For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops to swell her pride,
With scarfs and stays, and gloves and lace; and she will have men beside;
And when she's dressed with care and cost, all-tempting, fine and gay,
As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself away.
Our Polly is a sad slut, etc.

You baggage, you hussy! you inconsiderate jade! had you been hanged, it would not have vexed me, for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice! The wench is married, husband.

Peach. Married! The captain is a bold man, and will risk anything for money; to be sure he believes her a fortune. Do you think your mother and I should have lived comfortably so long together, if ever we had been married? Baggage!

Mrs. Peach. I knew she was always a proud slut; and now the wench has played the fool and married, because forsooth she would do like the gentry. Can you support the expense of a husband, hussy, in gaming,

drinking and whoring? have you money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife about who shall squander most? There are not many husbands and wives, who can bear the charges of plaguing one another in a handsome way. If you must be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, thou foolish jade, thou wilt be as ill used, and as much neglected, as if thou had'st married a lord!

Peach. Let not your anger, my dear, break through the rules of decency, for the captain looks upon himself in the military capacity, as a gentleman by his profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting, or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent chances for a wife. Tell me, hussy, are you ruined or no?

Mrs. Peach. With Polly's fortune, she might very well have gone off to a person of distinction. Yes, that you might, you pouting slut!

Peach. What, is the wench dumb? Speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an answer from you. Are you really bound wife to him, or are you only upon liking?

[*Pinches her.*

Polly. Oh! [*Screaming.*

Mrs. Peach. How the mother is to be pitied who hath handsome daughters! Locks, bolts, bars, and lectures of morality are nothing to them; they break through them all. They have as much pleasure in cheating a father and mother, as in cheating at cards.

Peach. Why, Polly, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our house.

AIR VIII—*Grim king of the ghosts, etc.*

Polly.

Can love be controll'd by advice?
Will Cupid our mothers obey?
Though my heart were as frozen as ice,
At his flame 'twould have melted away.

When he kiss'd me so closely he prest,
'Twas so sweet that I must have complied:
So I thought it both safest and best
To marry, for fear you should chide.

Mrs. Peach. Then all the hopes of our family are gone for ever and ever!

Peach. And Macheath may hang his father and mother-in-law, in hope to get into their daughter's fortune.

Polly. I did not marry him (as 'tis the fashion) coolly and deliberately for honor or money. But, I love him.

Mrs. Peach. Love him! worse and worse! I thought the girl had been better bred. O husband, husband! her folly makes me mad! my head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself——Oh! [*Faints.*

Peach. See, wench, to what a condition you have reduced your poor mother! a glass of cordial, this instant. How the poor woman takes it to heart!

[Polly *goes out and returns with it.*

Ah, hussy, now this is the only comfort your mother has left!

Polly. Give her another glass, Sir; my mama drinks double the quantity whenever she is out of order. This, you see, fetches her.

Mrs. Peach. The girl shows such a readiness, and so much concern, that I could almost find in my heart to forgive her.

AIR IX—*O Jenny, O Jenny, where hast thou been.*

O Polly, you might have toy'd and kiss'd;
By keeping men off, you keep them on.

Polly.

But he so teas'd me,
And he so pleas'd me,
What I did, you must have done—

Mrs. Peach. Not with a highwayman. . . . You sorry slut!

Peach. A word with you, wife. 'Tis no new thing for a wench to take a man without consent of parents. You know 'tis the frailty of woman, my dear.

Mrs. Peach. Yes, indeed, the sex is frail. But the first time a woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice, methinks, for then or never is the time to make her fortune. After that, she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

Peach. Make yourself a little easy; I have a thought shall soon set all matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? since what is done cannot be undone, we must all endeavor to make the best of it.

Mrs. Peach. Well, Polly; as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.—Your father is too fond of you, hussy.

Polly. Then all my sorrows are at an end.

Mrs. Peach. A mighty likely speech in troth, for a wench who is just married.

AIR X—*Thomas, I cannot, etc.*

Polly.

I, like a ship in storms, was tost;
Yet afraid to put in to land;
For, seiz'd in the port, the vessel's lost,
Whose treasure is contraband.
The waves are laid,
My duty's paid,
Oh joy beyond expression!
Thus, safe ashore,
I ask no more,
My all is in my possession.

Peach. I hear customers in t'other room. Go, talk with 'em, Polly; but come to us again, as soon as they are gone.—But, heark ye, child, if 'tis the gentleman who was here yesterday about the repeating watch; say, you believe, we can't get intelligence of it, till to-morrow. For I lent it to Suky Straddle, to make a figure with it to-night at a tavern in Drury Lane. If t'other gentleman calls for the silver-hilted sword; you know beetle-brow'd Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come from Tunbridge till Tuesday night; so that it cannot be had till then.

SCENE IX

PEACHUM, MRS. PEACHUM.

Peach. Dear wife, be a little pacified. Don't let your passion run away with your senses. Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

Mrs. Peach. If she had had only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have excused and huddled up a frailty of that sort. 'Tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish.

Peach. But money, wife, is the true fuller's earth for reputations, there is not a spot or a stain but what it can take out. A rich rogue now-a-days is fit company for any gentleman; and the world, my dear, hath not such a contempt for roguery as you imagine. I tell you, wife, I can make this match turn to our advantage.

Mrs. Peach. I am very sensible, husband, that Captain Macheath is worth money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three wives already, and then if he should die in a session or two, Polly's dower would come into dispute.

Peach. That, indeed, is a point which ought to be considered.

AIR XI—*A soldier and a sailor.*

A fox may steal your hens, Sir,
A whore your health and pence, Sir,
Your daughter rob your chest, Sir,
Your wife may steal your rest, Sir,
A thief your goods and plate.
But this is all but picking;
With rest, pence, chest, and chicken;
It ever was decreed, Sir,
If lawyer's hand is fee'd, Sir,
He steals your whole estate.

The lawyers are bitter enemies to those in our way. They don't care that anybody should get a clandestine livelihood but themselves.

SCENE X

MRS. PEACHUM, PEACHUM, POLLY.

Polly. 'Twas only Nimming Ned. He brought in a damask window-curtain, a hoop petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a periwig, and one silk stocking, from the fire that happened last night.

Peach. There is not a fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more goods out of fire than Ned. But now, Polly, to your affair; for matters must not be left as they are. You are married then, it seems?

Polly. Yes, Sir.

Peach. And how do you propose to live, child?

Polly. Like other women, Sir, upon the industry of my husband.

Mrs. Peach. What, is the wench turned fool? A highwayman's wife, like a soldier's, hath as little of his pay as of his company.

Peach. And had not you the common views of a gentlewoman in your marriage, Polly?

Polly. I don't know what you mean, Sir.

Peach. Of a jointure, and of being a widow.

Polly. But I love him, Sir: how then could I have thoughts of parting with him?

Peach. Parting with him! Why, that is the whole scheme and intention of all marriage articles. The comfortable estate of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits. Where is the woman who would scruple to be a wife, if she had it in her power to be a widow whenever she pleased? If you have any views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the match not so very unreasonable.

Polly. How I dread to hear your advice! Yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

Peach. Secure what he hath got, have him peached the next sessions, and then at once you are made a rich widow.

Polly. What, murder the man I love! The blood runs cold at my heart at the very thought of it.

Peach. Fie, Polly! What hath murder to do in the affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say, the captain himself would like that we should get the reward for his death sooner than a stranger. Why, Polly, the captain knows, that as 'tis his employment to rob, so 'tis ours to take robbers; every man in his business. So that there is no malice in the case.

Mrs. Peach. Ay, husband, now you have nicked the matter. To have him peached is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

AIR XII—*Now ponder well, ye parents dear.*

Polly.
Oh, ponder well! be not severe;
So save a wretched wife!
For on the rope that hangs my dear
Depends poor Polly's life.

Mrs. Peach. But your duty to your parents, hussy, obliges you to hang him. What

would many a wife give for such an opportunity!

Polly. What is a jointure, what is a widowhood to me? I know my heart. I cannot survive him.

AIR XIII—*Le printemps rappelle aux armes.*

The turtle thus with plaintive crying,
Her lover dying,
The turtle thus with plaintive crying,
Laments her dove.
Down she drops, quite spent with sighing.
Pair'd in death, as pair'd in love.

Thus, Sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

Mrs. Peach. What, is the fool in love in earnest then? I hate thee for being particular. Why, wench, thou art a shame to thy very sex.

Polly. But hear me, mother,—if you ever loved—

Mrs. Peach. Those cursed play-books she reads have been her ruin. One word more, hussy, and I shall knock your brains out, if you have any.

Peach. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear of mischief, and consider of what is proposed to you.

Mrs. Peach. Away, hussy. Hang your husband, and be dutiful.

Scene XI

MRS. PEACHUM, PEACHUM.
[POLLY *listening.*

Mrs. Peach. The thing, husband, must and shall be done. For the sake of intelligence we must take other measures, and have him peached the next session without her consent. If she will not know her duty, we know ours.

Peach. But really, my dear, it grieves one's heart to take off a great man. When I consider his personal bravery, his fine stratagem, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find in my heart to have a hand in his death. I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

Mrs. Peach. But in a case of necessity—our own lives are in danger.

Peach. Then, indeed, we must comply with the customs of the world, and make gratitude give way to interest. He shall be taken off.

Mrs. Peach. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

Peach. And I'll prepare matters for the Old Bailey.

Scene XII

POLLY.

Now I'm a wretch, indeed—methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand! —I hear the crowd extolling his resolution and intrepidity!—What volleys of sighs are sent from the windows of Holborn, that so comely a youth should be brought to disgrace!—I see him at the tree! The whole circle are in tears!—even butchers weep!—Jack Ketch himself hesitates to perform his duty, and would be glad to lose his fee, by a reprieve. What then will become of Polly? As yet I may inform him of their design, and aid him in his escape. It shall be so. But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear, dear conversation! That too will distract me. If he keep out of the way, my papa and mama may in time relent, and we may be happy. If he stays, he is hanged, and then he is lost for ever! He intended to lie concealed in my room, till the dusk of the evening. If they are abroad, I'll this instant let him out, lest some accident should prevent him.
[*Exit, and returns.*

Scene XIII

POLLY, MACHEATH.

AIR XIV—*Pretty Parrot, say.*

Mach.
Pretty Polly, say,
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover?

Polly.
Without disguise,
Heaving sighs,
Doating eyes,
My constant heart discover.
Fondly let me loll?

Mach.
O pretty, pretty Poll.

Polly. And are you as fond as ever, my dear?

Mach. Suspect my honor, my courage, suspect any thing but my love. May my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip her shoulder while I am pursued, if I ever forsake thee!

Polly. Nay. my dear, I have no reason to doubt you, for I find in the romance you lent me, none of the great heroes were ever false in love.

AIR XV—*Pray, fair one, be kind.*

Mach.
My heart was so free,
It rov'd like the bee,
Till Polly my passion requited;
I sipt each flower,
I chang'd ev'ry hour,
But here ev'ry flower is united.

Polly. Were you sentenced to transportation, sure, my dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

Mach. Is there any power, any force that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a pension out of the hands of a courtier, a fee from a lawyer, a pretty woman from a looking glass, or any woman from quadrille. But to tear me from thee is impossible!

AIR XVI—*Over the hills and far away.*

Were I laid on Greenland's coast,
And in my arms embrac'd my lass:
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half year's night would pass.

Polly.

Were I sold on Indian soil,
Soon as the burning day was clos'd,
I could mock the sultry toil,
When on my charmer's breast repos'd.

Mach. And I would love you all the day,

Polly. Every night would kiss and play,

Mach. If with me you'd fondly stray

Polly. Over the hills and far away.

Polly. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!——how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee. We must part.

Mach. How! Part!

Polly. We must, we must. My papa and mama are set against thy life. They now, even now are in search after thee. They are preparing evidence against thee. Thy life depends upon a moment.

AIR XVII—*Gin thou wert mine awn thing.*

Oh what pain it is to part!
Can I leave thee, can I leave thee?
Oh what pain it is to part!
Can thy Polly ever leave thee?
But lest death my love should thwart,
And bring thee to the fatal cart,
Thus I tear thee from my bleeding heart!
Fly hence, and let me leave thee.

One kiss and then—one kiss—begone—farewell.

Mach. My hand, my heart, my dear, is so riveted to thine, that I cannot unloose my hold.

Polly. But my papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of hope. A few weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

Mach. Must I then go?

Polly. And will not absence change your love?

Mach. If you doubt it, let me stay—and be hanged.

Polly. Oh how I fear! how I tremble!—Go—but when safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for till then Polly is wretched.

AIR XVIII—*Oh the broom, etc.*

Mach.

The miser thus a shilling sees,
Which he's oblig'd to pay,
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.

[*Parting, and looking back at each other with fondness; he at one door, she at the other.*

Polly.

The boy, thus, when his sparrow's flown,
The bird in silence eyes;
But soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs and cries.

ACT II

SCENE I

A TAVERN NEAR NEWGATE.

JEMMY TWITCHER, *Crook-finger'd* JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN *of* BAGSHOT, NIMMING NED, HENRY PADINGTON, MATT *of the* MINT, BEN BUDGE, *and the rest of the gang, at the table, with wine, brandy and tobacco.*

Ben. But pr'ythee, Matt, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my return from transportation.

Matt. Poor brother Tom had an accident this time twelve-month, and so clever a made fellow he was, that I could not save him from those flaying rascals the surgeons; and now, poor man, he is among the atomies at Surgeons' Hall.

Ben. So, it seems, his time was come.

Jem. But the present time is ours, and nobody alive hath more. Why are the laws levelled at us? Are we more dishonest than the rest of mankind? What we win, gentlemen, is our own by the law of arms, and the right of conquest.

Crook. Where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers, who to a man are above the fear of death?

Wat. Sound men, and true!

Robin. Of tried courage, and indefatigable industry!

Ned. Who is there here that would not die for his friend?

Harry. Who is there here that would betray him for his interest?

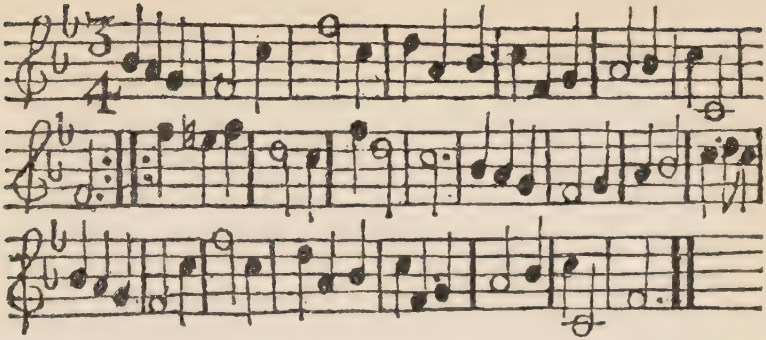
Matt. Show me a gang of courtiers that can say as much.

Ben. We are for a just partition of the world, for every man hath a right to enjoy life.

Matt. We retrench the superfluities of mankind. The world is avaricious, and I hate avarice. A covetous fellow, like a jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the robbers of mankind, for money was made for the free-hearted and generous; and where is the injury of taking from another, what he hath not the heart to make use of!

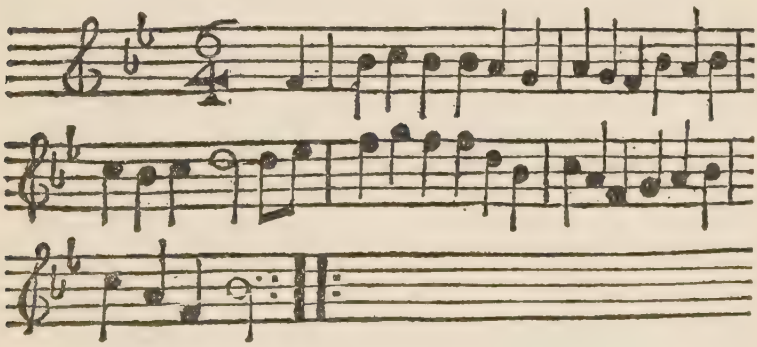
Jem. Our several stations for the day are fixed. Good luck attend us. Fill the glasses.

AIR XIX. Fill every Glass, &c.



Matt. *Fill every Glass, for Wine inspires us,*
And fires us
With Courage, Love and Joy.
Women and Wine should life employ.
Is there ought else on Earth desirous?
Chorus. *Fill every Glass,* &c.

AIR XXXV. Have you heard of a frolicksome Ditty, &c.



Macheath. *How happy could I be with either,*
Were t'other dear Charmer away!
But while you thus teaze me together,
To neither a Word will I say;
But tol de rol, &c.

AIR XIX—*Fill ev'ry glass, etc.*

Matt.
Fill ev'ry glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us,
With courage, love and joy.
Women and wine should life employ.
Is there ought else on earth desirous?
Chorus.
Fill ev'ry glass, etc.

Scene II

To them enter Macheath.

Mach. Gentlemen, well met. My heart hath been with you this hour; but an unexpected affair hath detained me. No ceremony, I beg you.

Matt. We were just breaking up to go upon duty. Am I to have the honor of taking the air with you, Sir, this evening upon the heath? I drink a dram now and then with the stage-coachmen in the way of friendship and intelligence, and I know that about this time there will be passengers upon the Western Road, who are worth speaking with.

Mach. I was to have been of that party—but—

Matt. But what, Sir?

Mach. Is there any man who suspects my courage?—

Matt. We have all been witnesses of it.—

Mach. My honor and truth to the gang?

Matt. I'll be answerable for it.

Mach. In the division of our booty, have I ever shown the least marks of avarice or injustice?

Matt. By these questions something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

Mach. I have a fixed confidence, gentlemen, in you all, as men of honor, and as such I value and respect you. Peachum is a man that is useful to us.

Matt. Is he about to play us any foul play? I'll shoot him through the head.

Mach. I beg you, gentlemen, act with conduct and discretion. A pistol is your last resort.

Matt. He knows nothing of this meeting.

Mach. Business cannot go on without him. He is a man who knows the world, and is a necessary agent to us. We have had a slight difference, and till it is accommodated I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my friends. You must continue to act under his direction, for the moment we break loose from him, our gang is ruined.

Matt. As a bawd to a whore, I grant you, he is to us of great convenience.

Mach. Make him believe I have quitted the gang, which I can never do but with life. At our private quarters I will continue to meet you. A week or so will probably reconcile us.

Matt. Your instructions shall be observed. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several duties; so till the evening at our quarters in Moor-fields we bid you farewell.

Mach. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you.

[*Sits down melancholy at the table.*

AIR XX—*March in Rinaldo, with drums and trumpets.*

Matt.
Let us take the road.
Hark! I hear the sound of coaches!
The hour of attack approaches,
To your arms, brave boys, and load.

See the ball I hold!
Let the chymists toil like asses,
Our fire their fire surpasses,
And turns all our lead to gold.

[The gang, ranged in the front of the stage, load their pistols, and stick them under their girdles; then go off singing the first part in chorus].

Scene III

Macheath, *Drawer.*

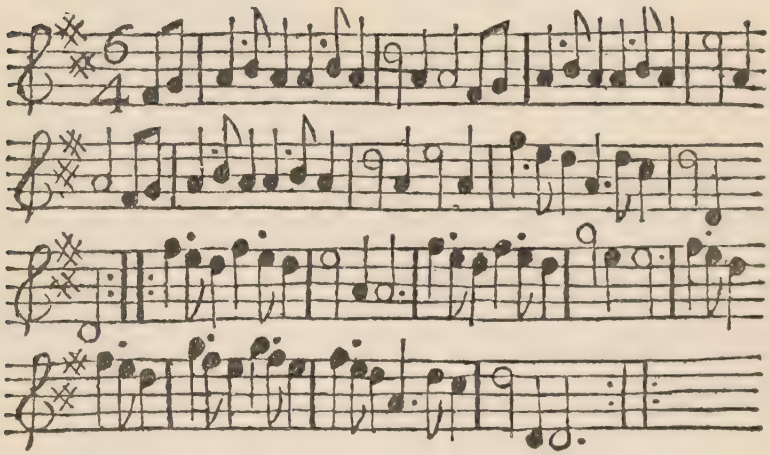
Mach. What a fool is a fond wench! Polly is most confoundedly bit—I love the sex. And a man who loves money, might be as well contented with one guinea, as I with one woman. The town perhaps hath been as much obliged to me, for recruiting it with free-hearted ladies, as to any recruiting officer in the army. If it were not for us, and the other gentlemen of the sword, Drury-Lane would be uninhabited.

AIR XXI—*Would you have a young virgin, etc.*

If the heart of a man is deprest with cares,
The mist is dispell'd when a woman appears;
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those,
Press her,
Caress her
With blisses,
Her kisses
Dissolve us in pleasure, and soft repose.

I must have women. There is nothing unbends the mind like them. Money is not so strong a cordial for the time. Drawer.—[*Enter Drawer.*] Is the porter gone for all the ladies, according to my directions?

AIR XXI. Would you have a young Virgin, &c.



If the Heart of a Man is deprest with Cares,
The Mist is dispell'd when a Woman appears ;
Like the Notes of a Fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly
Raises the Spirits, and charms our Ears,
Roses and Lilies her Cheeks disclose,
But her ripe Lips are more sweet than those.
Press her,
Caress her,
With Blisses,
Her Kisses
Dissolve us in Pleasure, and soft Repose.

Draw. I expect him back every minute. But you know, Sir, you sent him as far as Hockley in the Hole, for three of the ladies, for one in Vinegar Yard, and for the rest of them somewhere about Lewkner's Lane. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the bar bell. As they come I will show them up. Coming! coming!

Scene IV

Macheath, Mrs. Coaxer, Dolly Trull, Mrs. Vixen, Betty Doxy, Jenny Diver, Mrs. Slammekin, Suky Tawdry, *and* Molly Brazen.

Mach. Dear Mrs. Coaxer, you are welcome. You look charmingly to-day. I hope you don't want the repairs of quality, and lay on paint. Dolly Trull! kiss me, you slut; are you as amorous as ever, hussy? You are always so taken up with stealing hearts, that you don't allow yourself time to steal anything else. Ah Dolly, thou wilt ever be a coquette. Mrs. Vixen, I'm yours, I always loved a woman of wit and spirit; they make charming mistresses, but plaguy wives. Betty Doxy! come hither, hussy. Do you drink as hard as ever? You had better stick to good wholesome beer; for in troth, Betty, strong waters will, in time, ruin your constitution. You should leave those to your betters. What! and my pretty Jenny Diver too! As prim and demure as ever! There is not any prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctified look, with a more mischievous heart. Ah! thou art a dear artful hypocrite. Mrs. Slammekin! as careless and genteel as ever! all you fine ladies, who know your own beauty, affect an undress, but see, here's Suky Tawdry come to contradict what I was saying. Everything she gets one way, she lays out upon her back. Why, Suky, you must keep at least a dozen tally-men. Molly Brazen! [*She kisses him.*] That's well done. I love a free-hearted wench. Thou hast a most agreeable assurance, girl, and art as willing as a turtle. But hark! I hear music. The harper is at the door. *If music be the food of love, play on.* Ere you seat yourselves, ladies, what think you of a dance? Come in. [*Enter harper.*] Play the French tune, that Mrs. Slammekin was so fond of.

[*A dance* à la ronde *in the* French *manner; near the end of it this song and chorus.*]

AIR XXII—*Cotillion.*

Youth's the season made for joys,
Love is then our duty;
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her beauty.
Let's be gay,
While we may,
Beauty's a flower, despis'd in decay.

Youth's the season, etc.

Let us drink and sport to-day,
Ours is not to-morrow.
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the wing,
Life never knows the return of spring.

Chorus.
Let us drink, etc.

Mach. Now, pray ladies, take your places. Here, fellow. [*Pays the harper.*] Bid the drawer bring us more wine. [*Exit harper.*] If any of the ladies choose gin, I hope they will be so free to call for it.

Jenny. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, Sir, I never drink strong waters, but when I have the colic.

Mach. Just the excuse of the fine ladies! Why, a lady of quality is never without the colic. I hope, Mrs. Coaxer, you have had good success of late in your visits among the mercers.

Coax. We have so many interlopers. Yet, with industry, one may still have a little picking. I carried a silver-flowered lutestring, and a piece of black padesoy to Mr. Peachum's lock but last week.

Vix. There's Molly Brazen hath the ogle of a rattlesnake. She riveted a linen-draper's eye so fast upon her, that he was nicked of three pieces of cambric before he could look off.

Braz. Oh dear madam! But sure nothing can come up to your handling of laces! And then you have such a sweet deluding tongue! To cheat a man is nothing; but the woman must have fine parts indeed who cheats a woman!

Vix. Lace, madam, lies in a small compass, and is of easy conveyance. But you are apt, madam, to think too well of your friends.

Coax. If any woman hath more art than another, to be sure, 'tis Jenny Diver. Though her fellow be never so agreeable, she can pick his pocket as coolly as if money were her only pleasure. Now that is a command of the passions uncommon in a woman!

Jenny. I never go to the tavern with a man, but in the view of business. I have other hours, and other sort of men for my pleasure. But had I your address, madam——

Mach. Have done with your compliments, ladies; and drink about. You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you use to be.

Jenny. 'Tis not convenient, Sir, to show

my kindness among so many rivals. 'Tis your own choice, and not the warmth of my inclination that will determine you.

AIR XXIII—*All in a misty morning, etc.*

Before the barn-door crowing,
The cock by hens attended,
His eyes around him throwing,
Stands for a while suspended.

Then one he singles from the crew,
And cheers the happy hen;
With how do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again.

Mach. Ah Jenny! thou art a dear slut.

Trull. Pray, madam, were you ever in keeping?

Tawd. I hope, madam, I han't been so long upon the town, but I have met with some good fortune as well as my neighbors.

Trull. Pardon me, madam, I meant no harm by the question; 'twas only in the way of conversation.

Tawd. Indeed, madam, if I had not been a fool, I might have lived very handsomely with my last friend. But upon his missing five guineas, he turned me off. Now I never suspected he had counted them.

Slam. Who do you look upon, madam, as your best sort of keepers?

Trull. That, madam, is thereafter as they be.

Slam. I, madam, was once kept by a Jew; and bating their religion, to women they are a good sort of people.

Tawd. Now for my part, I own I like an old fellow; for we always make them pay for what they can't do.

Vix. A spruce prentice, let me tell you, ladies, is no ill thing, they bleed freely. I have sent at least two or three dozen of them in my time to the plantations.

Jenny. But to be sure, Sir, with so much good fortune as you have had upon the road, you must be grown immensely rich.

Mach. The road, indeed, hath done me justice, but the gaming-table hath been my ruin.

AIR XXIV—*When once I lay with another man's wife, etc.*

Jenny.
The gamesters and lawyers are jugglers alike,
If they meddle, your all is in danger:
Like gypsies, if once they can finger a souse,
Your pockets they pick, and they pilfer your house,
And give your estate to a stranger.

[A man of courage should never put anything to the risk but his life.] These are the tools of men of honor. Cards and dice are only fit for cowardly cheats, who prey upon their friends.

[*She takes up his pistol.* Tawdry *takes up the other.*

Tawd. This, Sir, is fitter for your hand. Besides your loss of money, 'tis a loss to the ladies. Gaming takes you off from women. How fond could I be of you! but before company, 'tis ill-bred.

Mach. Wanton hussies!

Jenny. I must and will have a kiss, to give my wine a zest.

[*They take him about the neck, and make signs to* Peachum *and constables, who rush in upon him.*

Scene V

To them Peachum *and Constables.*

Peach. I seize you, Sir, as my prisoner.

Mach. Was this well done, Jenny? Women are decoy ducks; who can trust them! Beasts, jades, jilts, harpies, furies, whores!

Peach. Your case, Mr. Macheath, is not particular. The greatest heroes have been ruined by women. But, to do them justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, Sir, take your leave of the ladies, and if they have a mind to make you a visit, they will be sure to find you at home. This gentleman, ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the captain to his lodgings.

AIR XXV—*When first I laid siege to my Chloris, etc.*

Mach.
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure.
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of ill,
I shall find no such furies as these are.

Peach. Ladies, I'll take care the reckoning shall be discharged.

[*Exit* Macheath, *guarded, with* Peachum *and Constables.*

Scene VI

The Women remain.

Vix. Look ye, Mrs. Jenny, though Mr. Peachum may have made a private bargain with you and Suky Tawdry for betraying the captain, as we were all assisting, we ought all to share alike.

Coax. I think Mr. Peachum, after so long an acquaintance, might have trusted me as well as Jenny Diver.

Slam. I am sure at least three men of his hanging, and in a year's time too, (if he did me justice) should be set down to my account.

Trull. Mrs. Slammekin, that is not fair. For you know one of them was taken in bed with me.

Jenny. As far as a bowl of punch or a treat, I believe Mrs. Suky will join with me. As for anything else, ladies, you cannot in conscience expect it.

Slam. Dear madam——

Trull. I would not for the world——

Slam. 'Tis impossible for me——

Trull. As I hope to be saved, madam——

Slam. Nay, then I must stay here all night.——

Trull. Since you command me.

[*Exeunt with great ceremony.*

Scene VII

Newgate.

Lockit, *Turnkeys,* Macheath, *Constables.*

Lock. Noble captain, you are welcome. You have not been a lodger of mine this year and half. You know the custom, Sir. Garnish, captain, garnish. Hand me down those fetters there.

Mach. Those, Mr. Lockit, seem to be the heaviest of the whole set! With your leave, I should like the further pair better.

Lock. Look ye, captain, we know what is fittest for our prisoners. When a gentleman uses me with civility, I always do the best I can to please him. Hand them down, I say. We have them of all prices, from one guinea to ten, and 'tis fitting every gentleman should please himself.

Mach. I understand you, Sir [*gives money*]. The fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few fortunes can bear the expense of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a gentleman.

Lock. Those, I see, will fit the captain better. Take down the further pair. Do but examine them, Sir,—never was better work. How genteelly they are made! They will fit as easy as a glove, and the nicest man in England might not be ashamed to wear them. [*He puts on the chains.*] If I had the best gentleman in the land in my custody, I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, Sir—I now leave you to your private meditations.

Scene VIII

Macheath.

Air xxvi—*Courtiers, courtiers, think it no harm, etc.*

Man may escape from rope and gun;
Nay, some have out-liv'd the doctor's pill;
Who takes a woman must be undone,
That basilisk is sure to kill.
The fly that sips treacle is lost in the sweets,
So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,
He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

To what a woeful plight have I brought myself! Here must I (all day-long, till I am hanged) be confined to hear the reproaches of a wench who lays her ruin at my door. I am in the custody of her father, and to be sure if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my execution. But I promised the wench marriage. What signifies a promise to a woman? Does not man in marriage itself promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, women will believe us; for they look upon a promise as an excuse for following their own inclinations. But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her. Would I were deaf!

Scene IX

Macheath, Lucy.

Lucy. You base man, you, how can you look me in the face after what hath passed between us?—See here, perfidious wretch, how I am forced to bear about the load of infamy you have laid upon me—O Macheath! thou hast robbed me of my quiet—to see thee tortured would give me pleasure.

Air xxvii—*A lovely lass to a friar came, etc.*

Thus when a good housewife sees a rat
In a trap in the morning taken,
With pleasure her heart goes pit-a-pat
In revenge for her loss of bacon.
Then she throws him
To the dog or cat,
To be worried, crush'd and shaken.

Mach. Have you no bowels, no tenderness, my dear Lucy, to see a husband in these circumstances?

Lucy. A husband!

Mach. In every respect but the form, and that, my dear, may be said over us at any time. Friends should not insist upon ceremonies. From a man of honor, his word is as good as his bond.

Lucy. 'Tis the pleasure of all you fine men to insult the women you have ruined.

Air xxviii—*'Twas when the sea was roaring, etc.*

How cruel are the traitors,
Who lie and swear in jest,
To cheat unguarded creatures
Of virtue, fame, and rest!

Whoever steals a shilling
Through shame the guilt conceals;
In love the perjur'd villain
With boasts the theft reveals.

Mach. The very first opportunity, my dear, (have but patience) you shall be my wife in whatever manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating monster! And so you think I know nothing of the affair of Miss Polly Peachum. I could tear thy eyes out!

Mach. Sure, Lucy, you can't be such a fool as to be jealous of Polly!

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you brute, you?

Mach. Married! Very good. The wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good opinion. 'Tis true I go to the house; I chat with the girl, I kiss her, I say a thousand things to her (as all gentlemen do) that mean nothing, to divert myself; and now the silly jade hath set it about that I am married to her, to let me know what she would be at. Indeed, my dear Lucy, these violent passions may be of ill consequence to a woman in your condition.

Lucy. Come, come, captain, for all your assurance, you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of your power to do me the justice you promised me.

Mach. A jealous woman believes everything her passion suggests. To convince you of my sincerity, if we can find the ordinary, I shall have no scruples of making you my wife; and I know the consequence of having two at a time.

Lucy. That you are only to be hanged, and so get rid of them both.

Mach. I am ready, my dear Lucy, to give you satisfaction—if you think there is any in marriage. What can a man of honor say more?

Lucy. So then it seems, you are not married to Miss Polly.

Mach. You know, Lucy, the girl is prodigiously conceited. No man can say a civil thing to her, but (like other fine ladies) her vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

AIR XXIX—*The sun had loos'd his weary teams, etc.*

The first time at the looking-glass
The mother sets her daughter,
The image strikes the smiling lass
With self-love ever after.
Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,
Thinks ev'ry charm grows stronger.
But alas, vain maid, all eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.

When women consider their own beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands; for they expect their lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

Lucy. Yonder is my father—perhaps this way we may light upon the ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your word. For I long to be made an honest woman.

Scene X

Peachum, Lockit *with an account-book.*

Lock. In this last affair, brother Peachum, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in Macheath.

Peach. We shall never fall out about an execution. But as to that article, pray how stands our last year's account?

Lock. If you will run your eye over it, you'll find 'tis fair and clearly stated.

Peach. This long arrear of the government is very hard upon us! Can it be expected that we should hang our acquaintance for nothing, when our betters will hardly save theirs without being paid for it? Unless the people in employment pay better, I promise them for the future, I shall let other rogues live besides their own.

Lock. Perhaps, brother, they are afraid these matters may be carried too far. We are treated too by them with contempt, as if our profession were not reputable.

Peach. In one respect, indeed, our employment may be reckoned dishonest, because, like great statesmen, we encourage those who betray their friends.

Lock. Such language, brother, anywhere else might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

AIR XXX—*How happy are we, etc.*

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be.
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe;
Each cries—That was levell'd at me.

Peach. Here's poor Ned Clencher's name, I see. Sure, Brother Lockit, there was a little unfair proceeding in Ned's case; for he told me in the condemned hold, that for value received, you had promised him a session or two longer without molestation.

Lock. Mr. Peachum, this is the first time my honor was ever called in question.

Peach. Business is at an end, if once we act dishonorably.

Lock. Who accuses me?

Peach. You are warm, brother.

Lock. He that attacks my honor, attacks my livelihood. And this usage, Sir, is not to be borne.

Peach. Since you provoke me to speak, I must tell you too, that Mrs. Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her information-money, for the apprehending of curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, brother, we must punctually pay our spies, or we shall have no information.

Lock. Is this language to me, Sirrah, who have saved you from the gallows, Sirrah?

[*Collaring each other.*

Peach. If I am hanged, it shall be for ridding the world of an arrant rascal.

Lock. This hand shall do the office of the halter you deserve, and throttle you, you dog!

Peach. Brother, brother, we are both in the wrong. We shall be both losers in the dispute—for you know we have it in our power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

Lock. Nor you so provoking.

Peach. 'Tis our mutual interest; 'tis for the interest of the world we should agree. If I said anything, brother, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon.

Lock. Brother Peachum, I can forgive as well as resent. Give me your hand. Suspicion does not become a friend.

Peach. I only meant to give you occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the gentleman about this snuff-box, that Filch nimmed two nights ago in the park. I appointed him at this hour.

Scene XI

Lockit, Lucy.

Lock. Whence come you, hussy!

Lucy. My tears might answer that question.

Lock. You have then been whimpering and fondling, like a spaniel, over the fellow that hath abused you.

Lucy. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my power to obey you, and hate him.

Lock. Learn to bear your husband's death like a reasonable woman. 'Tis not the fashion, now-a-days, so much as to affect sorrow upon these occasions. No woman would ever marry, if she had not the chance of mortality for a release. Act like a woman of spirit, hussy, and thank your father for what he is doing.

Air xxxi—*Of a noble race was Shenkin.*

Lucy.

Is then his fate decreed, Sir?
Such a man can I think of quitting?
When first we met, so moves me yet,
Oh see how my heart is splitting!

Lock. Look ye, Lucy—there is no saving him——so, I think, you must ev'n do like other widows—buy yourself weeds, and be cheerful.

Air xxxii

You'll think, e'er many days ensue,
This sentence not severe;
I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,
But with him hang your care.
Twang dang dillo dee.

Like a good wife, go moan over your dying husband. That, child, is your duty——Consider, girl, you can't have the man and the money too—so make yourself as easy as you can by getting all you can from him.

Scene XII

Lucy, Macheath.

Lucy. Though the ordinary was out of the way to-day, I hope, my dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my scruples——Oh, Sir!—my father's hard heart is not to be softened, and I am in the utmost despair.

Mach. But if I could raise a small sum—Would not twenty guineas, think you, move him?——Of all the arguments in the way of business, the perquisite is the most prevailing.——Your father's perquisites for the escape of prisoners must amount to a considerable sum in the year. Money well timed and properly applied, will do anything.

Air xxxiii—*London ladies.*

If you at an office solicit your due,
And would not have matters neglected;
You must quicken the clerk with the perquisite too,
To do what his duty directed.
Or would you the frowns of a lady prevent,
She too has this palpable failing,
The perquisite softens her into consent;
That reason with all is prevailing.

Lucy. What love or money can do shall be done: for all my comfort depends upon your safety.

Scene XIII

Lucy, Macheath, Polly.

Polly. Where is my dear husband?——Was a rope ever intended for his neck?—Oh let me throw my arms about it, and throttle thee with love!—Why dost thou turn away from me?—'Tis thy Polly—'Tis thy wife.

Mach. Was there ever such an unfortunate rascal as I am!

Lucy. Was there ever such another villain!

Polly. O Macheath! was it for this we parted? Taken! imprisoned! tried! hanged!——cruel reflection! I'll stay with thee till death—no force shall tear thy dear wife from thee now.——What means my love?—not one kind word! not one kind look! think what thy Polly suffers to see thee in this condition.

Air xxxiv—*All in the Downs, etc.*

Thus when the swallow, seeking prey,
Within the sash is closely pent,

His consort, with bemoaning lay,
Without sits pining for th' event.
Her chattering lovers all around her skim;
She heeds them not (poor bird!)—her soul's with him.

Mach. I must disown her. [*Aside.*] The wench is distracted.

Lucy. Am I then bilked of my virtue? Can I have no reparation? Sure men were born to lie, and women to believe them. O villain! villain!

Polly. Am I not thy wife? Thy neglect of me, thy aversion to me, too severely proves it. Look on me. Tell me, am I not thy wife?

Lucy. Perfidious wretch!

Polly. Barbarous husband!

Lucy. Hadst thou been hanged five months ago, I had been happy.

Polly. And I too—If you had been kind to me till death, it would not have vexed me—and that's no very unreasonable request (though from a wife), to a man who hath not above seven or eight days to live.

Lucy. Art thou then married to another? Hast thou two wives, monster?

Mach. If women's tongues can cease for an answer—hear me.

Lucy. I won't. Flesh and blood can't bear my usage.

Polly. Shall I not claim my own? Justice bids me speak.

AIR XXXV—*Have you heard of a frolicsome ditty, etc.*

Mach.
How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away!
But while you thus teaze me together,
To neither a word will I say:
But tol de rol, etc.

Polly. Sure, my dear, there ought to be some preference shown to a wife! At least she may claim the appearance of it. He must be distracted with his misfortunes, or he could not use me thus!

Lucy. O villain, villain! thou hast deceived me—I could even inform against thee with pleasure. Not a prude wishes more heartily to have facts against her intimate acquaintance, than I now wish to have facts against thee. I would have her satisfaction, and they should all out.

AIR XXXVI—*Irish Trot.*

Polly. I'm bubbled.

Lucy. ——I'm bubbled.

Polly. Oh how I am troubled!

Lucy. Bamboozled, and bit!

Polly. ——My distresses are doubled.

Lucy.
When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,
These fingers, with pleasure, could fasten the noose.

Polly. I'm bubbled, etc.

Mach. Be pacified, my dear Lucy——This is all a fetch of Polly's to make me desperate with you in case I get off. If I am hanged, she would fain have the credit of being thought my widow——Really, Polly, this is no time for a dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of marriage, I am thinking of hanging.

Polly. And hast thou the heart to persist in disowning me?

Mach. And hast thou the heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my misfortunes?

Lucy. Really, Miss Peachum, you but expose yourself. Besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a gentleman in his circumstances.

AIR XXXVII

Polly.
Cease your funning,
Force or cunning
Never shall my heart trepan.
All these sallies
Are but malice
To seduce my constant man.
'Tis most certain,
By their flirting,
Women oft have envy shown;
Pleas'd to ruin
Others' wooing;
Never happy in their own!

Lucy. Decency, madam, methinks, might teach you to behave yourself with some reserve with the husband, while his wife is present.

Mach. But, seriously, Polly, this is carrying the joke a little too far.

Lucy. If you are determined, madam, to raise a disturbance in the prison, I shall be obliged to send for the turnkey to show you the door. I am sorry, madam, you force me to be so ill-bred.

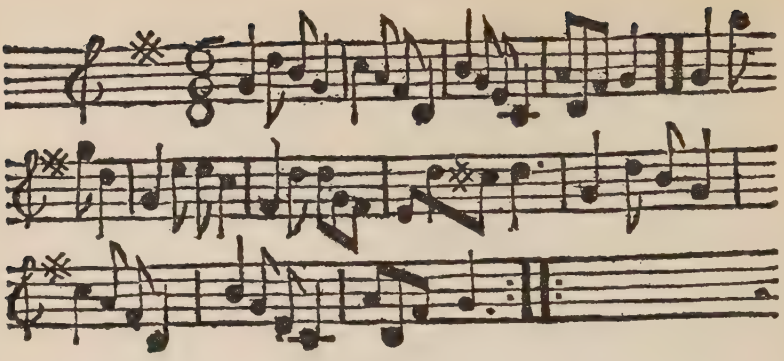
Polly. Give me leave to tell you, madam; these forward airs don't become you in the least, madam. And my duty, madam, obliges me to stay with my husband, madam.

AIR XXXVIII—*Good-morrow, gossip Joan.*

Lucy.
Why, how now, Madam Flirt?
If you thus must chatter;
And are for flinging dirt,
Let's try who best can spatter!
Madam Flirt!

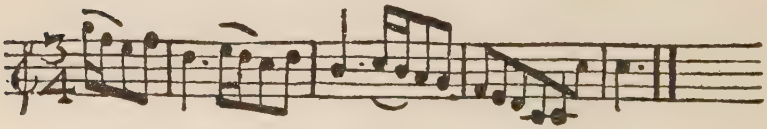
Polly.
Why, how now, saucy jade;
Sure the wench is tipsy!

AIR XXXVII.



Polly. *Cease your Funning;*
Force or Cunning
Never shall my Heart trapan.
All these Sallies
Are but Malice
To seduce my constant Man.
'Tis most certain,
By their flirting
Women oft' have Envy shown.
Pleas'd, to ruin
Others wooing;
Never happy in their own.

AIR LIX. Of all the Girls that are so smart.



Of all the Friends in time of Grief,
When threatning Death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring Relief,
As this best Friend, a Brimmer. [Drinks.

How can you see me made [*To him.*
The scoff of such a gipsy?
Saucy jade! [*To her.*

Scene XIV

Lucy, Macheath, Polly, Peachum.

Peach. Where's my wench? Ah hussy! hussy!——Come you home, you slut; and when your fellow is hanged, hang yourself, to make your family some amends.

Polly. Dear, dear father, do not tear me from him——I must speak; I have more to say to him——Oh! twist thy fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee!

Peach. Sure all women are alike! If ever they commit the folly, they are sure to commit another by exposing themselves.—Away—not a word more—you are my prisoner now, hussy.

Air xxxix—*Irish howl.*

Polly.
No power on earth can e'er divide
The knot that sacred love hath tied.
When parents draw against our mind,
The true-love's knot they faster bind.
Oh, oh ray, oh amborah—Oh, oh, etc.
[*Holding* Macheath, Peachum *pulling her.*

Scene XV

Lucy, Macheath.

Mach. I am naturally compassionate, wife; so that I could not use the wench as she deserved; which made you at first suspect there was something in what she said.

Lucy. Indeed, my dear, I was strangely puzzled.

Mach. If that had been the case, her father would never have brought me into this circumstance—No, Lucy,—I had rather die than be false to thee.

Lucy. How happy am I if you say this from your heart! For I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hanged than in the arms of another.

Mach. But couldst thou bear to see me hanged?

Lucy. O Macheath, I can never live to see that day.

Mach. You see, Lucy; in the account of love you are in my debt, and you must now be convinced that I rather choose to die than to be another's. Make me, if possible, love thee more, and let me owe my life to thee—if you refuse to assist me, Peachum and your father will immediately put me beyond all means of escape.

Lucy. My father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the prisoners: and I fancy he is now taking his nap in his own room—if I can procure the keys, shall I go off with thee, my dear?

Mach. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie concealed. As soon as the search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee—till then my heart is thy prisoner.

Lucy. Come then, my dear husband—owe thy life to me—and though you love me not—be grateful. But that Polly runs in my head strangely.

Mach. A moment of time may make us unhappy for ever.

Air xl—*The lass of Patie's mill, etc.*

Lucy.
I like the fox shall grieve,
Whose mate hath left her side,
Whom hounds, from morn till eve,
Chase o'er the country wide.
Where can my lover hide?
Where cheat the weary pack?
If love be not his guide,
He never will come back!

ACT III

Scene I

Newgate.

Lockit, Lucy.

Lock. To be sure, wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him to this escape.

Lucy. Sir, here hath been Peachum and his daughter Polly, and to be sure they know the ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the place all their lives. Why must all your suspicion light upon me?

Lock. Lucy, Lucy, I will have none of these shuffling answers.

Lucy. Well then—if I know anything of him, I wish I may be burnt!

Lock. Keep your temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

Lucy. Keep yours, Sir. I do wish I may be burnt, I do. And what can I say more to convince you?

Lock. Did he tip handsomely? How much did he come down with? Come, hussy, don't cheat your father; and I shall not be angry with you. Perhaps, you have made a better bargain with him than I could have done. How much, my good girl?

Lucy. You know, Sir, I am fond of him, and would have given money to have kept him with me.

Lock. Ah, Lucy! thy education might have put thee more upon thy guard; for a girl in the bar of an ale-house is always besieged.

Lucy. Dear Sir, mention not my education—for 'twas to that I owe my ruin.

AIR XLI—*If love's a sweet passion, etc.*

When young at the bar you first taught me to score,
And bid me be free of my lips, and no more;
I was kiss'd by the parson, the squire, and the sot.
When the guest was departed, the kiss was forgot.
But his kiss was so sweet, and so closely he prest,
That I languish'd and pined till I granted the rest.

If you can forgive me, Sir, I will make a fair confession, for to be sure he hath been a most barbarous villain to me.

Lock. And so you have let him escape, hussy—Have you?

Lucy. When a woman loves, a kind look, a tender word can persuade her to anything, and I could ask no other bribe.

Lock. Thou wilt always be a vulgar slut, Lucy. If you would not be looked upon as a fool, you should never do anything but upon the foot of interest. Those that act otherwise are their own bubbles.

Lucy. But love, Sir, is a misfortune that may happen to the most discreet woman, and in love we are all fools alike. Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinced that Polly Peachum is actually his wife. Did I let him escape (fool that I was!) to go to her? Polly will wheedle herself into his money, and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

Lock. So I am to be ruined, because, forsooth, you must be in love!—a very pretty excuse!

Lucy. I could murder that impudent happy strumpet—I gave him his life, and that creature enjoys the sweets of it. Ungrateful Macheath!

AIR XLII—*South-sea Ballad.*

My love is all madness and folly,
Alone I lie,
Toss, tumble, and cry,
What a happy creature is Polly!
Was e'er such a wretch as I!
With rage I redden like scarlet,
That my dear inconstant varlet,
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
Stark blind to my charms,
Is lost in the arms
Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!
This, this my resentment alarms.

Lock. And so, after all this mischief, I must stay here to be entertained with your caterwauling, mistress Puss! Out of my sight, wanton strumpet! You shall fast and mortify yourself into reason, with now and then a little handsome discipline to bring you to your senses. Go.

Scene II

LOCKIT.

Peachum then intends to outwit me in this affair; but I'll be even with him. The dog is leaky in his liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage. Lions, wolves, and vultures don't live together in herds, droves or flocks. Of all animals of prey, man is the only sociable one. Every one of us preys upon his neighbor, and yet we herd together. Peachum is my companion, my friend. According to the custom of the world, indeed, he may quote thousands of precedents for cheating me. And shall not I make use of the privilege of friendship to make him a return?

AIR XLIII—*Packington's Pound.*

Thus gamesters united in friendship are found,
Though they know that their industry all is a cheat;
They flock to their prey at the dice-box's sound,
And join to promote one another's deceit.
But if by mishap
They fail of a chap,
To keep in their hands, they each other entrap.
Like pikes, lank with hunger, who miss of their ends,
They bite their companions, and prey on their friends.

Now, Peachum, you and I, like honest tradesmen, are to have a fair trial which of us two can over-reach the other. Lucy. [*Enter* LUCY.] Are there any of Peachum's people now in the house?

Lucy. Filch, Sir, is drinking a quartern of strong waters in the next room with Black Moll.

Lock. Bid him come to me.

Scene III

LOCKIT, FILCH.

Lock. Why, boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starved; like a shotten herring.

Filch. One had need have the constitution of a horse to go through the business—Since the favorite child-getter was disabled by a mishap, I have picked up a little money by helping the ladies to a pregnancy against their being called down to sentence. But if a man cannot get an honest livelihood any easier way, I am sure, 'tis what I can't undertake for another session.

Lock. Truly, if that great man should tip off, 'twould be an irreparable loss. The vigor and prowess of a knight-errant never saved half the ladies in distress that he hath done. But, boy, canst thou tell me where thy master is to be found?

Filch. At his lock, Sir, at the Crooked Billet.

Lock. Very well. I have nothing more with you. [*Exit* Filch.] I'll go to him there, for I have many important affairs to settle with him; and in the way of those transactions, I'll artfully get into his secret. So that Macheath shall not remain a day longer out o' my clutches.

Scene IV

A Gaming-House.

Macheath *in a fine tarnished coat,* Ben Budge, Matt of the Mint.

Mach. I am sorry, gentlemen, the road was so barren of money. When my friends are in difficulties, I am always glad that my fortune can be serviceable to them. [*Gives them money.*] You see, gentlemen, I am not a mere court friend, who professes everything and will do nothing.

air xliv—*Lillibullero.*

The modes of the court so common are grown,
That a true friend can hardly be met;
Friendship for interest is but a loan,
Which they let out for what they can get.
'Tis true, you find
Some friends so kind,
Who will give you good counsel themselves to defend.
In sorrowful ditty,
They promise, they pity,
But shift you, for money, from friend to friend.

But we, gentlemen, have still honor enough to break through the corruptions of the world. And while I can serve you, you may command me.

Ben. It grieves my heart that so generous a man should be involved in such difficulties, as oblige him to live with such ill company, and herd with gamesters.

Matt. See the partiality of mankind! One man may steal a horse, better than another look over a hedge. Of all mechanics, of all servile handicrafts-men, a gamester is the vilest. But yet, as many of the quality are of the profession, he is admitted amongst the politest company. I wonder we are not more respected.

Mach. There will be deep play to-night at Marybone and consequently money may be picked up upon the road. Meet me there, and I'll give you the hint who is worth setting.

Matt. The fellow with a brown coat, with narrow gold binding, I am told, is never without money.

Mach. What do you mean, Matt? Sure you will not think of meddling with him! He's a good honest kind of a fellow, and one of us.

Ben. To be sure, Sir, we will put ourselves under your direction.

Mach. Have an eye upon the money-lenders. A rouleau or two, would prove a pretty sort of an expedition. I hate extortion.

Matt. These rouleaus are very pretty things. I hate your bank bills. There is such a hazard in putting them off.

Mach. There is a certain man of distinction, who in his time hath nicked me out of a great deal of the ready. He is in my cash, Ben. I'll point him out to you this evening, and you shall draw upon him for the debt. The company are met; I hear the dice-box in the other room. So, gentlemen, your servant. You'll meet me at Marybone.

Scene V

Peachum's Lock.

A table with wine, brandy, pipes and tobacco.

Peachum, Lockit.

Lock. The Coronation account, brother Peachum, is of so intricate a nature, that I believe it will never be settled.

Peach. It consists, indeed, of a great variety of articles. It was worth to our people, in fees of different kinds, above ten instalments. This is part of the account, brother, that lies open before us.

Lock. A lady's tail of rich brocade—that, I see, is disposed of—

Peach. To Mrs. Diana Trapes, the tally-woman, and she will make a good hand on't in shoes and slippers, to trick out young ladies, upon their going into keeping.

Lock. But I don't see any article of the jewels.

Peach. Those are so well known that they must be sent abroad. You'll find them entered under the article of exportation. As for the snuff-boxes, watches, swords, etc., I thought it best to enter them under their several heads.

Lock. Seven and twenty women's pockets complete; with the several things therein contained; all sealed, numbered, and entered.

Peach. But, brother, it is impossible for us now to enter upon this affair.——We should have the whole day before us.——Besides, the account of the last half-year's

plate is in a book by itself, which lies at the other office.

Lock. Bring us then more liquor.——To-day shall be for pleasure.——To-morrow for business.——Ah brother, those daughters of ours are two slippery hussies. Keep a watchful eye upon Polly, and Macheath in a day or two shall be our own again.

AIR XLV—*Down in the North Country, etc.*

Lock.

What gudgeons are we men!
Ev'ry woman's easy prey,
Though we have felt the hook, again
We bite and they betray.
The bird that hath been trapt,
When he hears his calling mate,
To her he flies, again he's clapt
Within the wiry grate.

Peach. But what signifies catching the bird, if your daughter Lucy will set open the door of the cage?

Lock. If men were answerable for the follies and frailties of their wives and daughters, no friends could keep a good correspondence together for two days.——This is unkind of you, brother; for among good friends, what they say or do goes for nothing.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's Mrs. Diana Trapes wants to speak with you.

Peach. Shall we admit her, brother Lockit?

Lock. By all means—she's a good customer, and a fine-spoken woman—and a woman who drinks and talks so freely, will enliven the conversation.

Peach. Desire her to walk in.

[*Exit Servant.*

SCENE VI

PEACHUM, LOCKIT, MRS. TRAPES.

Peach. Dear Mrs. Dye, your servant——one may know by your kiss, that your gin is excellent.

Trapes. I was always very curious in my liquors.

Lock. There is no perfumed breath like it—I have been long acquainted with the flavor of those lips——han't I, Mrs. Dye?

Trapes. Fill it up.—I take as large draughts of liquor, as I did of love.—I hate a flincher in either.

AIR XLVI—*A Shepherd kept sheep, etc.*

In the days of my youth I could bill like a dove, *fa, la, la,* etc.
Like a sparrow at all times was ready for love, *fa, la, la,* etc.
The life of all mortals in kissing should pass
Lip to lip while we're young—then the lip to the glass, *fa,* etc.

But now, Mr. Peachum, to our business.—If you have blacks of any kind, brought in of late; mantoes——velvet scarfs——petticoats ——let it be what it will—I am your chap ——for all my ladies are very fond of mourning.

Peach. Why, look ye, Mrs. Dye—you deal so hard with us, that we can afford to give the gentlemen, who venture their lives for the goods, little or nothing.

Trapes. The hard times oblige me to go very near in my dealing. To be sure, of late years I have been a great sufferer by the parliament.—Three thousand pounds would hardly make me amends.—The act for destroying the mint was a severe cut upon our business—'till then, if a customer stept out of the way—we knew where to have her—No doubt you know Mrs. Coaxer—there's a wench now (till to-day) with a good suit of clothes of mine upon her back, and I could never set eyes upon her for three months together. Since the act too against imprisonment for small sums, my loss there too hath been very considerable; and it must be so, when a lady can borrow a handsome petticoat, or a clean gown, and I not have the least hank upon her! And, o' my conscience, now-a-days most ladies take a delight in cheating, when they can do it with safety.

Peach. Madam, you had a handsome gold watch of us t'other day for seven guineas. Considering we must have our profit—to a gentleman upon the road, a gold watch will be scarce worth the taking.

Trapes. Consider, Mr. Peachum, that watch was remarkable and not of very safe sale. If you have any black velvet scarfs—they are handsome winter wear; and take with most gentlemen who deal with my customers. 'Tis I that put the ladies upon a good foot. 'Tis not youth or beauty that fixes their price. The gentlemen always pay according to their dress, from half a crown to two guineas; and yet those hussies make nothing of bilking me. Then, too, allowing for accidents—I have eleven fine customers now down under the surgeon's hands; what with fees and other expenses, there are great goings-out, and no comings-in, and not a farthing to pay for at least a month's clothing. We run great risks—great risks indeed.

Peach. As I remember, you said something just now of Mrs. Coaxer.

Trapes. Yes, Sir. To be sure, I stript her of a suit of my own clothes about two hours ago; and have left her as she should be, in her shift, with a lover of hers, at my

house. She called him up stairs, as he was going to Marybone in a hackney coach. And I hope, for her own sake and mine, she will persuade the captain to redeem her, for the captain is very generous to the ladies.

Lock. What captain?

Trapes. He thought I did not know him—an intimate acquaintance of yours, Mr. Peachum—only Captain Macheath—as fine as a lord.

Peach. To-morrow, dear Mrs. Dye, you shall set your own price upon any of the goods you like. We have at least half a dozen velvet scarfs, and all at your service. Will you give me leave to make you a present of this suit of nightclothes for your own wearing? But are you sure it is Captain Macheath?

Trapes. Though he thinks I have forgot him; nobody knows him better. I have taken a great deal of the captain's money in my time at second-hand, for he always loved to have his ladies well drest.

Peach. Mr. Lockit and I have a little business with the captain. You understand me. And we will satisfy you for Mrs. Coaxer's debt.

Lock. Depend upon it—we will deal like men of honor.

Trapes. I don't enquire after your affairs—so whatever happens, I wash my hands on't. It hath always been my maxim, that one friend should assist another. But if you please, I'll take one of the scarfs home with me. 'Tis always good to have something in hand.

SCENE VII

NEWGATE.

LUCY.

Jealousy, rage, love and fear, are at once tearing me to pieces. How I am weather-beaten and shattered with distresses!

AIR XLVII—*One evening, having lost my way, etc.*

I'm like a skiff on the ocean tost,
Now high, now low, with each billow borne,
With her rudder broke, and her anchor lost,
Deserted and all forlorn.

While thus I lie rolling and tossing all night,
That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight!
Revenge, revenge, revenge,
Shall appease my restless sprite.

I have the ratsbane ready. I run no risk; for I can lay her death upon the gin, and so many die of that naturally that I shall never be called in question. But say I were to be hanged—I never could be hanged for anything that would give me greater comfort, than the poisoning that slut. [*Enter* FILCH.

Filch. **Madam, here's our Miss Polly come to wait upon you.**

Lucy. **Show her in.**

SCENE VIII

LUCY, POLLY.

Lucy. **Dear madam, your servant. I hope you will pardon my passion, when I was so happy to see you last. I was so overrun with the spleen, that I was perfectly out of myself. And really when one hath the spleen, everything is to be excused by a friend.**

AIR XLVIII—*Now Roger, I'll tell thee, because thou'rt my son.*

When a wife's in her pout,
(As she's sometimes, no doubt);
The good husband, as meek as a lamb,
Her vapors to still,
First grants her her will,
And the quieting draught is a dram.
Poor man! And the quieting draught is a dram.

——I wish all our quarrels might have so comfortable a reconciliation.

Polly. **I have no excuse for my own behavior, madam, but my misfortunes. And really, madam, I suffer too upon your account.**

Lucy. **But, Miss Polly—in the way of friendship, will you give me leave to propose a glass of cordial to you?**

Polly. **Strong waters are apt to give me the headache—I hope, madam, you will excuse me.**

Lucy. **Not the greatest lady in the land could have better in her closet, for her own private drinking. You seem mighty low in spirits, my dear.**

Polly. **I am sorry, madam, my health will not allow me to accept of your offer. I should not have left you in the rude manner I did when we met last, madam, had not my papa hauled me away so unexpectedly. I was indeed somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some expressions that were disrespectful. But really, madam, the captain treated me with so much contempt and cruelty, that I deserved your pity, rather than your resentment.**

Lucy. **But since his escape, no doubt, all matters are made up again. Ah Polly! Polly! 'tis I am the unhappy wife; and he loves you as if you were only his mistress.**

Polly. **Sure, madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your jealousy. A man is always afraid of a woman who loves him too well—so that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.**

Lucy. **Then our cases, my dear Polly, are**

exactly alike. Both of us, indeed, have been too fond.

AIR XLIX—*O Bessy Bell.*

Polly.
A curse attends that woman's love,
Who always would be pleasing.

Lucy.
The pertness of the billing dove,
Like tickling, is but teazing.

Polly.
What then in love can woman do?

Lucy.
If we grow fond they shun us.

Polly.
And when we fly them, they pursue.

Lucy.
But leave us when they've won us.

Lucy. Love is so very whimsical in both sexes, that it is impossible to be lasting. But my heart is particular, and contradicts my own observation.

Polly. But really, mistress Lucy, by his last behavior, I think I ought to envy you. When I was forced from him, he did not shew the least tenderness. But perhaps, he hath a heart not capable of it.

AIR L—*Would fate to me Belinda give.*

Among the men, coquets we find,
Who court by turns all womankind;
And we grant all their hearts desir'd,
When they are flatter'd, and admir'd.

The coquets of both sexes are self-lovers, and that is a love no other whatever can dispossess. I fear, my dear Lucy, our husband is one of those.

Lucy. Away with these melancholy reflections,—indeed, my dear Polly, we are both of us a cup too low. Let me prevail upon you, to accept of my offer.

AIR LI—*Come, sweet lass, etc.*

Come, sweet lass,
Let's banish sorrow
'Till to-morrow;
Come, sweet lass,
Let's take a chirping glass.
Wine can clear
The vapors of despair;
And make us light as air;
Then drink, and banish care.

I can't bear, child, to see you in such low spirits. And I must persuade you to what I know will do you good. I shall now soon be even with the hypocritical strumpet. [*Aside.*

Scene IX

Polly.

Polly. All this wheedling of Lucy cannot be for nothing. At this time too, when I know she hates me! The dissembling of a woman is always the forerunner of mischief. By pouring strong waters down my throat, she thinks to pump some secrets out of me. I'll be upon my guard, and won't taste a drop of her liquor, I'm resolved.

Scene X

Lucy, *with strong waters.* Polly.

Lucy. Come, Miss Polly.

Polly. Indeed, child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose.——You must, my dear, excuse me.

Lucy. Really, Miss Polly, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a cup of strong waters as a lady before company. I vow, Polly, I shall take it monstrously ill if you refuse me.—Brandy and men (though women love them never so well) are always taken by us with some reluctance——unless 'tis in private.

Polly. I protest, madam, it goes against me.——What do I see! Macheath again in custody!—Now every glimmering of happiness is lost.

[*Drops the glass of liquor on the ground.*

Lucy. Since things are thus, I am glad the wench hath escaped: for by this event, 'tis plain, she was not happy enough to deserve to be poisoned. [*Aside.*

Scene XI

Lockit, Macheath, Peachum, Lucy, Polly.

Lock. Set your heart to rest, captain.—You have neither the chance of love or money for another escape,——for you are ordered to be called down upon your trial immediately.

Peach. Away, hussies!—This is not a time for a man to be hampered with his wives.——You see the gentleman is in chains already.

Lucy. O husband, husband, my heart longed to see thee; but to see thee thus distracts me!

Polly. Will not my dear husband look upon his Polly? Why hadst thou not flown to me for protection? with me thou hadst been safe.

AIR LII—*The last time I went o'er the moor.*

Polly.
Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes.

Lucy.
Bestow one glance to cheer me.

Polly.
Think, with that look, thy Polly dies.

Lucy.
Oh shun me not——but hear me.

Polly.
'Tis Polly sues.

Lucy.
——'Tis Lucy speaks.

Polly.
Is thus true love requited?

Lucy.
My heart is bursting.

Polly.
———Mine too breaks.

Lucy.
Must I?

Polly.
——Must I be slighted?

Mach. What would you have me say, ladies?——You see, this affair will soon be at an end, without my disobliging either of you.

Peach. But the settling this point, captain, might prevent a law suit between your two widows.

AIR LIII—*Tom Tinker's my true love.*

Mach.
Which way shall I turn me? How can I decide?
Wives, the day of our death, are as fond as a bride.
One wife is too much for most husbands to hear,
But two at a time there's no mortal can bear.
This way, and that way, and which way I will,
What would comfort the one, t'other wife would take ill.

Polly. But if his own misfortunes have made him insensible to mine——a father sure will be more compassonate. Dear, dear Sir, sink the material evidence, and bring him off at his trial——Polly upon her knees begs it of you.

AIR LIV—*I am a poor shepherd undone.*

When my hero in court appears,
And stands arraign'd for his life;
Then think of poor Polly's tears;
For ah! poor Polly's his wife.
Like the sailor he holds up his hand,
Distrest on the dashing wave.
To die a dry death at land,
Is as bad as a wat'ry grave.
And alas, poor Polly;
Alack, and well-a-day!
Before I was in love,
Oh, every month was May!

Lucy. If Peachum's heart is hardened; sure you, Sir, will have more compassion on a daughter. I know the evidence is in your power. How then can you be a tyrant to me? [*Kneeling.*

AIR LV—*Ianthe the lovely, etc.*

When he holds up his hand arraign'd for his life,
Oh think of your daughter, and think I'm his wife!
What are cannons, or bombs, or clashing of swords?
For death is more certain by witnesses' words.
Then nail up their lips; that dread thunder allay;
And each month of my life will hereafter be May.

Lock. Macheath's time is come, Lucy. We know our own affairs, therefore let us have no more whimpering or whining.

AIR LVI—*A cobbler there was, etc.*

Ourselves, like the great, to secure a retreat,
When matters require it, must give up our gang.
And good reason why,
Or instead of the fry,
Ev'n Peachum and I,
Like poor petty rascals, might hang, hang;
Like poor petty rascals might hang.

Peach. Set your heart at rest, Polly. Your husband is to die to-day. Therefore if you are not already provided, 'tis high time to look about for another. There's comfort for you, you slut.

Lock. We are ready, Sir, to conduct you to the Old Bailey.

AIR LVII—*Bonny Dundee.*

Mach.
The charge is prepar'd; the lawyers are met,
The judges all rang'd (a terrible show!).
I go, undismay'd—for death is a debt,
A debt on demand. So, take what I owe.
Then farewell, my love—dear charmers, adieu.
Contented I die—'tis the better for you.
Here ends all dispute the rest of our lives,
For this way at once I please all my wives.

Now, gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.

Scene XII

Lucy, Polly, Filch.

Polly. Follow them, Filch, to the court. And when the trial is over, bring me a par-

ticular account of his behavior, and of everything that happened.——You'll find me here with Miss Lucy. [*Exit* Filch.] But why is all this music?

Lucy. The prisoners, whose trials are put off till next sessions, are diverting themselves.

Polly. Sure there is nothing so charming as music! I'm fond of it to distraction!—— But alas!——now, all mirth seems an insult upon my affliction.——Let us retire, my dear Lucy, and indulge our sorrows.——The noisy crew, you see, are coming upon us. [*Exeunt.*

A dance of prisoners in chains, etc.

Scene XIII

The Condemned Hold.

Macheath, *in a melancholy posture.*

air lviii—*Happy groves.*

O cruel, cruel, cruel case!
Must I suffer this disgrace?

air lix—*Of all the girls that are so smart.*

Of all the friends in time of grief,
When threat'ning death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring relief,
As this best friend, a brimmer. [*Drinks.*

air lx—*Britons, strike home.*

Since I must swing,—I scorn, I scorn to wince or whine. [*Rises.*

air lxi—*Chevy Chase.*

But now again my spirits sink;
I'll raise them high with wine.
[*Drinks a glass of wine.*

air lxii—*To old Sir Simon the king.*

But valor the stronger grows,
The stronger liquor we're drinking.
And how can we feel our woes,
When we've left the trouble of thinking?
[*Drinks.*

air lxiii—*Joy to great Cæsar.*

If thus——a man can die.
Much bolder with brandy.
[*Pours out a bumper of brandy.*

air lxiv—*There was an old woman.*

So I drink off this bumper.—And now I can stand the test.
And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as the best. [*Drinks.*

air lxv—*Did you ever hear of a gallant sailor.*

But can I leave my pretty hussies,
Without one tear, or tender sigh?

air lxvi—*Why are mine eyes still flowing.*

Their eyes, their lips, their busses,
Recall my love.——Ah, must I die?

air lxvii—*Greensleeves.*

Since laws were made for ev'ry degree,
To curb vice in others, as well as me,
I wonder we han't better company,
Upon Tyburn tree!
But gold from law can take out the sting;
And if rich men like us were to swing,
'Twould thin the land, such numbers to string
Upon Tyburn tree!

Jailor. Some friends of yours, captain, desire to be admitted. I leave you together.

Scene XIV

Macheath, Ben Budge, Matt of the Mint.

Mach. For my having broke prison, you see, gentlemen, I am ordered immediate execution. The sheriff's officers, I believe, are now at the door. That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me, I own surprised me! 'Tis a plain proof that the world is all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust one another than other people. Therefore, I beg you, gentlemen, look well to yourselves, for in all probability you may live some months longer.

Matt. We are heartily sorry, captain, for your misfortune.—But 'tis what we must all come to.

Mach. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infamous scoundrels. Their lives are as much in your power, as yours are in theirs. Remember your dying friend!—'Tis my last request. Bring those villains to the gallows before you, and I am satisfied.

Matt. We'll do it.

Jailor. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy entreat a word with you.

Mach. Gentlemen, adieu.

Scene XV

Lucy, Macheath, Polly.

Mach. My dear Lucy—my dear Polly—Whatsoever hath passed between us is now at an end. If you are fond of marrying again, the best advice I can give you, is to ship yourselves off for the West Indies, where you'll have a fair chance of getting a husband apiece; or by good luck, two or three, as you like best.

Polly. How can I support this sight?

Lucy. There is nothing moves one so much as a great man in distress.

AIR LXVIII—*All you that must take a leap, etc.*

Lucy.
Would I might be hang'd!

Polly.
——And I would so too!

Lucy.
To be hang'd with you.

Polly.
——My dear, with you.

Mach.
Oh leave me to thought! I fear! I doubt! I tremble! I droop!—See, my courage is out.
[*Turns up the empty bottle.*

Polly. No token of love?
Mach. ——See, my courage is out.
[*Turns up the empty pot.*
Lucy. No token of love?
Polly. ——Adieu.
Lucy. ——Farewell.
Mach. But hark! I hear the toll of the bell!
Chorus. Tol de rol lol, etc.
Jailor. Four women more, captain, with a child apiece! See, here they come.
[*Enter women and children.*
Mach. What——four wives more!——This is too much.——Here——tell the sheriff's officers I am ready. [*Exit* Macheath *guarded.*

Scene XVI

To them enter Player, *and* Beggar.

Play. But, honest friend, I hope you don't intend that Macheath shall be really executed.

Beg. Most certainly, Sir. To make the piece perfect, I was for doing strict poetical justice. Macheath is to be hanged; and for the other personages of the drama, the audience must have supposed they were all either hanged or transported.

Play. Why then, friend, this is a downright deep tragedy. The catastrophe is manifestly wrong, for an opera must end happily.

Beg. Your objection, Sir, is very just; and is easily removed: for you must allow, that in this kind of drama, 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about. So—you rabble there—run and cry a reprieve!—let the prisoner be brought back to his wives in triumph.

Play. All this we must do, to comply with the taste of the town.

Beg. Through the whole piece you may observe such a similitude of manners in high and low life, that it is difficult to determine whether (in the fashionable vices) the fine gentlemen imitate the gentlemen of the road, or the gentlemen of the road the fine gentlemen. Had the play remained, as I at first intended, it would have carried a most excellent moral. 'Twould have shown that the lower sort of people have their vices in a degree as well as the rich; and that they are punished for them.

Scene XVII

To them Macheath, *with rabble, etc.*

Mach. So, it seems, I am not left to my choice, but must have a wife at last. Look ye, my dears, we will have no controversy now. Let us give this day to mirth, and I am sure she who thinks herself my wife will testify her joy by a dance.

All. Come, a dance—a dance.

Mach. Ladies, I hope you will give me leave to present a partner to each of you. And (if I may without offence) for this time, I take Polly for mine. And for life, you slut,—for we were really married. As for the rest—but at present keep your own secret.
[*To* Polly.

A DANCE

AIR LXIX—*Lumps of pudding, etc.*

Thus I stand like the Turk, with his doxies around;
From all sides their glances his passion confound:
For black, brown, and fair, his inconstancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns:
Each calls forth her charms, to provoke his desires:
Though willing to all, with but one he retires.
But think of this maxim, and put off your sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

Chorus—But think of this maxim, etc.

HENRY FIELDING

TOM THUMB THE GREAT

Henry Fielding lived in the flourishing period of the eighteenth century, before reason and common sense in matters literary had given way to the sentimentalism and pseudo-romanticism of the later decades, and he was one of the most robust representatives of this robust time. In his youth he went a merry pace, though not quite to the extent indicated in Thackeray's engaging picture, and in his later life with fearlessness and thoroughness he became as the simple London magistrate a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well. His abounding vitality and his devotion to right kept him at his task when stricken with disease; his thoughtfulness for others made him forget his own pain in theirs, and his hatred of wrong and love of right made him one of the greatest satiric writers of his age.

Born of good family at Sharpham Park, Somerset, on April 22, 1707, Fielding was educated at Eton College and at the University of Leyden, where he took his degree in the Faculty of Letters in 1728. The same year he was in London with extravagant tastes and an unpaid income of £200 a year. Like many another youth of genius he turned to the stage for support and produced with moderate success two plays imitative of Congreve. By 1730 he had discovered that his bent lay towards satire, and using his own experiences as subject for farce, he wrote *The Author's Farce and the Pleasures of the Town* (1730). Then he made fun of others in his admirable burlesque *Tom Thumb* (1730), which after a successful run he enlarged and to which he appended a critical preface and commentary as solemn and ridiculous as the play, with the title, *The Tragedy of Tragedies; or, The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great with the Annotations of H. Scriblerus Secundus* (1731). Plays now came thick and fast but of decidedly second-rate quality. In 1736 he took over the so-called French theatre in the Haymarket and presented his own burlesque *Pasquin*, which was modelled on *The Rehearsal*, and is only inferior to *Tom Thumb*. *The Historical Register for 1736*, which attacked Walpole's corrupt methods, led to governmental interference, with the result that the Licensing Act was passed on June 21, 1737, and so put an end to Fielding's direct connection with the stage.[1]

[1] In addition to the plays mentioned above Fielding wrote *Love in Several Masques* (1728); *The Temple Beau* (1730); *The Letter-Writers*,

Fielding now began to study law, and was admitted to the bar in June, 1740. In the same year his real genius accidentally discovered itself when he undertook to parody Richardson's *Pamela.* Its sentimentality and hothouse morality aroused Fielding's masculine mirth and incited him to depict a virtuous hero who would be the fitting counterpart to the excellent Pamela. But Joseph Andrews, the hero, soon came to have an independent interest in the eyes of the satirist, and his adventures grew into a plot sufficient in itself. Accordingly we have *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews* (1742), the first great novel in English literature. The following year appeared three volumes of *Miscellanies,* including *A Journey from This World to the Next,* and his ironical masterpiece *The History of the Life of the Late Jonathan Wild the Great.* The death in 1743 of his wife, whom he had married in 1735, almost broke his heart. His sole consolation was in the sympathetic grief of her maid, whose sorrow was only less than his own. Four years later he married this maid and lived happily with her till his death, despite the vilest kind of calumnies, directed against them both. Meanwhile he is writing political articles for *The True Patriot* and *The Jacobite's Journal,* and is practising his profession. In December, 1748, he was made Justice of the Peace for Westminster, and henceforth till within a few months of his death he spent laborious days putting down crime so that there was in London, it was said, "not even no such thing as a murder, but not even a street robbery."

His greatest work, the supreme novel of the century, *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling,* was published in February, 1749, and was at once acclaimed at its true worth. *Amelia,* his last novel, was published in December, 1751. There are two testimonials to the contemporary appreciation of the work: Johnson stayed up all night to read it through, and Fielding's publisher paid him £1000 for it and lost nothing by the transaction. Journalistic work and his untiring zeal as a magistrate kept him busy till ill health demanded rest. With his wife and eldest daughter he sailed for Lisbon on June 26, 1754, but he reached his destination only to die there on October 8. The charming and pathetic record of the journey is the last product of his pen.

During the period covered by the plays in our volume there appeared three notable burlesques on the drama and on dramatic conditions, Buckingham's *Rehearsal* (1671), Fielding's *Tom Thumb* (1731), and Sheridan's *The Critic* (1779). The first was intended more as a personal attack on Dryden than as a burlesque of the heroic play; the second was a joyous satire on dramatists and critics for their creative and critical absurdities;

The Grub-Street Opera, The Lottery (1731); *The Modern Husband, The Debauchees, The Covent-Garden Tragedy, The Mock Doctor* (1732); *The Miser,* an adaptation of Molière's *L'Avare, Deborah* (1733); *The Intriguing Chambermaid, Don Quixote in England* (1734); *The Virgin Unmasked, The Universal Gallant* (1735); *Eurydice, Eurydice Hissed* (1737); *The Wedding Day* (1743); *Tumble-Down Dick* (1744).

the third was a lively attack on would-be patrons of the stage, affected authors, and the bombastic style of the contemporary drama. The first and third present the rehearsal of a play with the comments and criticisms of interested spectators; the second is a pure mock-heroic burlesque with learned footnotes parodying the erudite commentaries of scholars and ironically justifying extravagant diction in dramatic productions.

When Buckingham produced his *Rehearsal,* Dryden's *Conquest of Granada,* the greatest of the heroic plays, was on the crest of its popularity. A very keen eye was, however, not required to see the possibilities of ridicule in the extravagances of Almanzor and his kind, and since personal enmity was the real motive, Buckingham entered into the fun of his burlesque with malicious zest. He represents Dryden as a fool and a knave, who steals his ideas and keeps a mistress, and who makes no secret of either offence. Bayes (as Dryden is called) follows purely mechanical methods in constructing his plays, is awkward in his technique, and is extravagant in his diction, but with it all he is highly complacent. He clumsily conveys information to his audience, he subordinates plot to fine speeches, he fails to motivate events and he confuses his audience by hopelessly confounding events and characters. He unwittingly amuses his critics with his "snip-snap" dialogue, his reasoning in verse, and his portrayal of the eternal conflict between love and honor, which he reduces to an absurdity. He seriously presents scenes of impossible operatic magnificence and a stupendous battle is waged by two single contestants. Above all, he surpasses Almanzor in Drawcansir, who can

> "make proud Jove, with all his thunder, see
> This single arm more dreadful is than he."

Sheridan gratified no personal spite when he wrote *The Critic.* The patron of the stage as presented in Dangle is an ever-living type and is drawn from no special individual; Sir Fretful Plagiary, who stands for Cumberland, the boresome author of sentimental plays, is portrayed with much truth but without malice. Sheridan was interested in satirizing not persons but classes, the puffing critics, the jealous and vain playwrights, and in ridiculing absurd dramatic ideas and methods. So he took a final fling at the sentimental drama, which he had wounded unto death in his other plays: "The theatre in proper hands," says Sneer, the conventional critic, "might certainly be made the school of morality; but now, I am sorry to say it, people seem to go there principally for their entertainment." Like Buckingham, Sheridan ridicules the awkwardness of many a dramatist in conveying necessary information to his audience, the lack of connection between the two plots of many tragedies, the mixture of the love motive with the historical without regard to dramatic unity. He ridicules stock situations, as when a deadlock is suddenly broken, a hidden identity is revealed, a disguise is thrown off,—all in order that complica-

tions may be unravelled. He parodies flowery diction, prayers to Mars before battle, dialogue in single-word speeches, a dying speech cut short in the middle of a word. He interprets a "thinking part" as conveying profound thought. He brings in scenes of splendor and mad scenes of utter gibberish, and he ends with the usual spectacle of a battle, in which, on this occasion, the enemies of England are routed.

In form Fielding's *Tom Thumb* differs entirely from the other two burlesques. It is written throughout in the mock-heroic style and is more properly a burlesque in that it is modelled on the heroic play that it parodies and in that the plot and the diction of such a play are reduced to complete absurdity. The ridicule is directed chiefly against the heroic play, but Fielding does not limit himself to this type. His range extends from Fletcher to Thomson, over nearly a century of dramatic production. The flourishing period of the heroic play was the first twenty-five years after the Restoration, but the type persisted well into the eighteenth century. Extravagance in plot and bombast in diction prevailed in tragedy throughout the early decades of the century; it was only in comedy that effective work was being done. Accordingly, we are not surprised to find Fielding with his keen scent for the absurd exposing the extravagances of the contemporary stage.

The events of the burlesque are essentially those of the heroic play. The hero returns victorious with the captive queen; the king, for whom the hero has successfully fought, falls in love with the captive queen, while his own queen becomes enamored of the hero; the hero, however, demands as his reward the hand of the king's daughter. Hence follow the usual complications. We have also prophecies of woe, a casual murder by the hero to avenge an insult to his friend, a ghost scene in which disaster is foretold, a rebellion raised by the disappointed rival of the hero, a magnificent battle in which the rebellion is crushed, the celebration of the victory, the sudden tragic end of the hero, and the extermination of every one else.

Here we have mighty events and an heroic character forming the basis for parody. The names of the personages betray at the outset the burlesque intent, Tom Thumb as the hero, Dollallolla as the queen, Huncamunca as the princess, not to mention lesser ones. So also in the list of the *dramatis personæ* the characters are described in the mock-heroic fashion: the noble Arthur "stands a little in fear" of his queen; Dollallolla is "entirely faultless, saving that she is a little given to drink"; Huncamunca is ready to marry both her lovers. In the action of the play the mighty hero is the diminutive Tom Thumb, who is so valiant in war that "millions of giants crowd his chariot wheels." The queen celebrates a glorious victory by getting drunk on arrack punch; her passion finds expression in choice billingsgate; when her honor conflicts with her love, so much the worse for her honor.

So complete was Fielding's burlesque of the conventional ghost scene that it provoked laughter in Swift, who declared that he "had not laughed above twice" in his life, once at the tricks of a merry-andrew and again, as Mrs. Pilkington inaccurately reported, when Tom Thumb killed the ghost. The pure fustian that the ghost utters is hardly more absurd than the foolish bombast of the heroic ghost. Delightfully comic is the impatient interruption of the king upon the ghost's lengthy and solemn tirade, in which he enumerates the things he has seen. Here it was that Swift laughed:

> "D——n all that thou hast seen!—dost thou, beneath the shape
> Of Gaffer Thumb, come hither to abuse me
> With similes, to keep me on the rack?
> Hence—or, by all the torments of thy hell,
> I'll run thee through the body, though thou'st none."

The tragic issue of the burlesque differs from the end in the heroic play; in the latter the hero is triumphant and only his enemies are slain. Fielding saw here, however, an admirable opportunity to satirize the wholesale slaughter in contemporary tragedies; he accordingly brings in wholly without motivation the grotesque destruction of the hero in the jaws of the red cow, and the murders of all the others in orderly succession.

Hilarious laughter must have greeted this play when it was acted before an audience that could stand pretty strong parody. The dramatic disease called for a powerful remedy. Fielding was, however, not satisfied with an appeal to a theatrical audience only; he wished to reach readers as well, and for their benefit he prefixed a learned preface and appended footnotes, all of an apparently solemn and painstaking nature. He had to his hand a burlesque that exactly suited his purpose. Dr. William Wagstaffe had written in 1711 a parody of Addison's appreciation of the ballads of *Chevy Chase* and *The Children of the Wood,* which he called *A Comment upon the History of Tom Thumb* and which was included in the collected edition of his *Miscellaneous Works* (1726). Like Addison he quotes from the ballad and he supports his judgments by means of parallel passages from the Latin poets. He also inserts in italics passages from Addison's prose works in order to heighten the comic effect. Fielding's preface and notes are much the same in character as Wagstaffe's. Learned authorities are quoted from ancient and modern times; Latin quotations abound. Verbal emendations are suggested after the fashion of Bentley's to *Paradise Lost.* Parallel passages, plagiarisms, and the like are noted with scrupulous detail. Speeches of special beauty are pointed out by this highly appreciative editor, and the carping criticisms of hostile critics are properly scorned. The so-called critical material is wholly without malice; it is satirical of authors and critics for their work and not for personal failings or misfortunes. Fielding's delightful irony penetrates throughout.

The burlesque was reworked and made into a burletta by Kane O'Hara in 1780; songs were added and the satirical element was largely lost sight of. In this form the play kept the stage till well towards the close of the nineteenth century.

THE TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES

OR, THE

LIFE AND DEATH OF TOM THUMB THE GREAT

With the Annotations of

H. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS

FIRST ACTED IN 1730, AND ALTERED IN 1731

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

KING ARTHUR, *a passionate sort of king, husband to* QUEEN DOLLALLOLLA, *of whom he stands a little in fear; father to* HUNCAMUNCA, *whom he is very fond of and in love with* GLUMDALCA.

TOM THUMB THE GREAT, *a little hero with a great soul, something violent in his temper, which is a little abated by his love for* HUNCAMUNCA.

GHOST OF GAFFER THUMB, *a whimsical sort of Ghost.*

LORD GRIZZLE, *extremely zealous for the liberty of the subject, very choleric in his temper, and in love with* HUNCAMUNCA.

MERLIN, *a conjurer, and in some sort father to* TOM THUMB.

NOODLE, DOODLE, *courtiers in place, and consequently of that party that is uppermost.*

FOODLE, *a courtier that is out of place, and consequently of that party that is undermost.*

BAILIFF and FOLLOWER, *of the party of the plaintiff.*

PARSON, *of the side of the church.*

WOMEN

QUEEN DOLLALLOLLA, *wife to* KING ARTHUR, *and mother to* HUNCAMUNCA, *a woman entirely faultless, saving that she is a little given to drink, a little too much a virago towards her husband, and in love with* TOM THUMB.

THE PRINCESS HUNCAMUNCA, *daughter to their Majesties* KING ARTHUR *and* QUEEN DOLLALLOLLA, *of a very sweet, gentle, and amorous disposition, equally in love with* LORD GRIZZLE *and* TOM THUMB, *and desirous to be married to them both.*

GLUMDALCA, *of the giants, a captive queen, beloved by the king, but in love with* TOM THUMB.

CLEORA, MUSTACHA, *maids of honor in love with* NOODLE *and* DOODLE.

Courtiers, Guards, Rebels, Drums, Trumpets, Thunder and Lightning.

SCENE.—THE COURT OF KING ARTHUR, AND A PLAIN THEREABOUTS.

ACT I

Scene I

The Palace.—Doodle, Noodle.

Doodle. **Sure such a[1] day as this was never seen!**
The sun himself, on this auspicious day,
Shines like a beau in a new birth-day suit:
This down the seams embroidered, that the beams.
All nature wears one universal grin.
Nood. **This day, O Mr. Doodle, is a day**
Indeed!—A day,[2] we never saw before.

The mighty[3] Thomas Thumb victorious comes;
Millions of giants crowd his chariot wheels,
[4] Giants! to whom the giants in Guildhall
Are infant dwarfs. They frown, and foam, and roar.
While Thumb, regardless of their noise, rides on.
So some cock-sparrow in a farmer's yard,
Hops at the head of an huge flock of turkeys.
Dood. **When Goody Thumb first brought this Thomas forth,**

Love is not sin but where 'tis sinful love.
Don Sebastian.
Nature is nature, Lælius.
Sophonisba.
Men are but men, we did not make ourselves. *Revenge.*

[1] Corneille recommends some very remarkable day wherein to fix the action of a tragedy. This the best of our tragical writers have understood to mean a day remarkable for the serenity of the sky, or what we generally call a fine summer's day: so that, according to this their exposition, the same months are proper for tragedy which are proper for pastoral. Most of our celebrated English tragedies, as *Cato, Mariamne, Tamerlane,* &c., begin with their observations on the morning. Lee seems to have come the nearest to this beautiful description of our author's:

The morning dawns with an unwonted crimson,
The flowers all odorous seem, the garden birds
Sing louder, and the laughing sun ascends
The gaudy earth with an unusual brightness:
All nature smiles. *Cæs. Borg.*

Massinissa, in the *New Sophonisba,* is also a favorite of the sun:

—The sun too seems
As conscious of my joy, with broader eye
To look abroad the world, and all things smile
Like Sophonisba.

Memnon, in the *Persian Princess,* makes the sun decline rising, that he may not peep on objects which would profane his brightness:

—The morning rises slow,
And all those ruddy streaks that used to paint
The day's approach are lost in clouds, as if
The horrors of the night had sent 'em back,
To warn the sun he should not leave the sea,
To peep, &c.

[2] This line is highly conformable to the beautiful simplicity of the ancients. It hath been copied by almost every modern.

Not to be is not to be in woe.
State of Innocence.

[3] Dr. B—y reads, The mighty Tall-mast Thumb. Mr. D—s, The mighty Thumbing Thumb. Mr. T—d reads, Thundering. I think Thomas more agreeable to the great simplicity so apparent in our author.

[4] That learned historian Mr. S—n, in the third number of his criticism on our author, takes great pains to explode this passage. "It is," says he, "difficult to guess what giants are here meant, unless the giant Despair in the *Pilgrim's Progress,* or the giant Greatness in the *Royal Villain;* for I have heard of no other sort of giants in the reign of king Arthur." Petrus Burmannus makes three Tom Thumbs, one whereof he supposes to have been the same person whom the Greeks call Hercules; and that by these giants are to be understood the Centaurs slain by that hero. Another Tom Thumb he contends to have been no other than the Hermes Trismegistus of the ancients. The third Tom Thumb he places under the reign of king Arthur; to which third Tom Thumb, says he, the actions of the other two were attributed. Now, though I know that this opinion is supported by an assertion of Justus Lipsius, "Thomam illum Thumbum non alium quàm Herculem fuisse satis constat," yet shall I venture to oppose one line of Mr. Midwinter against them all:

In Arthur's court Tom Thumb did live.

"But then," says Dr. B—y, "if we place Tom Thumb in the court of king Arthur, it will be proper to place that court out of Britain, where no giants were ever heard of." Spenser, in his *Fairy Queen,* is of another opinion, where, describing Albion, he says,

——Far within a savage nation dwelt
Of hideous giants.

And in the same canto:

Then Elfar, with two brethren giants had,
The one of which had two heads—
The other three.

Risum teneatis, amici.

The Genius of our land triumphant reigned;
Then, then, O Arthur! did thy Genius reign.
Nood. **They tell me it is[5] whispered in the books**
Of all our sages, that this mighty hero,
By Merlin's art begot, hath not a bone
Within his skin, but is a lump of gristle.
Dood. **Then 'tis a gristle of no mortal kind;**
Some God, my Noodle, stept into the place
Of Gaffer Thumb, and more than[6] half begot
This mighty Tom.
Nood. **[7]—Sure he was sent express**
From Heaven to be the pillar of our state.
Though small his body be, so very small,
A chairman's leg is more than twice as large,
Yet is his soul like any mountain big;
And as a mountain once brought forth a mouse,
[8]So doth this mouse contain a mighty mountain.
Dood. **Mountain indeed! So terrible his name,**

[5] "To whisper in books," says Mr. D—s, "is arrant nonsense." I am afraid this learned man does not sufficiently understand the extensive meaning of the word whisper. If he had rightly understood what is meant by the "senses whispering the soul," in the *Persian Princess*, or what "whispering like winds" is in *Aurengzebe*, or like thunder in another author, he would have understood this. Emmeline in Dryden sees a voice, but she was born blind, which is an excuse Panthea cannot plead in Cyrus, who hears a sight:

——Your description will surpass
All fiction, painting, or dumb show of horror,
That ever ears yet heard, or eyes beheld.

When Mr. D—s understands these, he will understand whispering in books.

[6] —Some ruffian stept into his father's place,
And more than half begot him.
Mary Queen of Scots.

[7] —For Ulamar seems sent express from Heaven,
To civilize this rugged Indian clime.
Liberty Asserted.

[8] "Omne majus continet in se minus, sed minus non in se majus continere potest," says Scaliger in Thumbo. I suppose he would have cavilled at these beautiful lines in the *Earl of Essex*:

——Thy most inveterate soul,
That looks through the foul prison of thy body.

And at those of Dryden:

The palace is without too well designed;
Conduct me in, for I will view thy mind.
Aurengzebe.

[9]The giant nurses frighten children with it,
And cry Tom Thumb is come, and if you are
Naughty, will surely take the child away.
Nood. **But hark![10] these trumpets speak the king's approach.**
Dood. **He comes most luckily for my petition.** [*Flourish.*

Scene II

King, Queen, Grizzle, Noodle, Doodle, Foodle.

King. **[11]Let nothing but a face of joy appear;**
The man who frowns this day shall lose his head,
That he may have no face to frown withal.
Smile Dollallolla—Ha! what wrinkled sorrow
[12]Hangs, sits, lies, frowns upon thy knitted brow?
Whence flow those tears fast down thy blubbered cheeks,
Like a swoln gutter, gushing through the streets?
Queen. **[13]Excess of joy, my lord, I've heard folks say,**
Gives tears as certain as excess of grief.
King. **If it be so, let all men cry for joy,**

[9] Mr. Banks hath copied this almost verbatim:

It was enough to say, here's Essex come,
And nurses stilled their children with the fright. *Earl of Essex.*

[10] The trumpet in a tragedy is generally as much as to say Enter king, which makes Mr. Banks, in one of his plays, call it the trumpet's formal sound.

[11] Phraortes, in the *Captives*, seems to have been acquainted with king Arthur:

Proclaim a festival for seven days' space,
Let the court shine in all its pomp and lustre,
Let all our streets resound with shouts of joy;
Let music's care-dispelling voice be heard;
The sumptuous banquet and the flowing goblet
Shall warm the cheek and fill the heart with gladness.
Astarbe shall sit mistress of the feast.

[12] Repentance frowns on thy contracted brow.
Sophonisba.
Hung on his clouded brow, I marked despair.
Ibid.
——A sullen gloom
Scowls on his brow. *Busiris.*

[13] Plato is of this opinion, and so is Mr. Banks:

Behold these tears sprung from fresh pain and joy. *Earl of Essex.*

[14] **Till my whole court be drowned with their tears;**
Nay, till they overflow my utmost land,
And leave me nothing but the sea to rule.
Dood. **My liege, I a petition have here got.**
King. **Petition me no petitions, sir, to-day:**
Let other hours be set apart for business.
To-day it is our pleasure to be [15] **drunk.**

[14] These floods are very frequent in the tragic authors:
Near to some murmuring brook I'll lay me down,
Whose waters, if they should too shallow flow,
My tears shall swell them up till I will drown. LEE'S *Sophonisba.*
Pouring forth tears at such a lavish rate,
That were the world on fire they might have drowned
The wrath of heaven, and quenched the mighty ruin. *Mithridates.*
One author changes the waters of grief to those of joy:
——These tears, that sprung from tides of grief,
Are now augmented to a flood of joy. *Cyrus the Great.*
Another:
Turns all the streams of heat, and makes them flow
In pity's channel. *Royal Villain.*
One drowns himself:
——Pity like a torrent pours me down,
Now I am drowning all within a deluge. *Anne Bullen.*
Cyrus drowns the whole world:
Our swelling grief
Shall melt into a deluge, and the world
Shall drown in tears. *Cyrus the Great.*

[15] An expression vastly beneath the dignity of tragedy, says Mr. D—s, yet we find the word he cavils at in the mouth of Mithridates less properly used, and applied to a more terrible idea:
I would be drunk with death. *Mithridates.*
The author of the new *Sophonisba* taketh hold of this monosyllable, and uses it pretty much to the same purpose:
The Carthaginian sword with Roman blood
Was drunk.
I would ask Mr. D—s which gives him the best idea, a drunken king, or a drunken sword?
Mr. Tate dresses up king Arthur's resolution in heroic:
Merry, my lord, o' th' captain's humor right,
I am resolved to be dead drunk to-night.
Lee also uses this charming word:
Love's the drunkenness of the mind. *Gloriana.*

And this our queen shall be as drunk as we.
Queen. **(Though I already** [16] **half seas over am)**
If the capacious goblet overflow
With arrack punch—'fore George! I'll see it out:
Of rum and brandy I'll not taste a drop.
King. **Though rack, in punch, eight shillings be a quart,**
And rum and brandy be no more than six,
Rather than quarrel you shall have your will.
[*Trumpets.*
But, ha! the warrior comes—the great Tom Thumb.
The little hero, giant-killing boy,
Preserver of my kingdom, is arrived.

SCENE III

TOM THUMB *to them, with Officers, Prisoners, and Attendants.*

King. [17] **Oh! welcome most, most welcome to my arms.**
What gratitude can thank away the debt
Your valor lays upon me?
Queen. ——— [18] **Oh! ye gods!** [*Aside.*
Thumb. **When I'm not thanked at all, I'm thanked enough.**
[19] **I've done my duty, and I've done no more.**
Queen. **Was ever such a godlike creature seen?** [*Aside.*
King. **Thy modesty's a** [20] **candle to thy merit,**
It shines itself, and shows thy merit too.
But say, my boy, where didst thou leave the giants?
Thumb. **My liege, without the castle gates they stand,**
The castle gates too low for their admittance.
King. **What look they like?**

[16] Dryden hath borrowed this, and applied it improperly:
I'm half seas o'er in death. *Cleomenes.*

[17] This figure is in great use among the tragedians:
'Tis therefore, therefore 'tis. *Victim.*
I long, repent, repent, and long again. *Busiris.*

[18] A tragical exclamation.

[19] This line is copied verbatim in the *Captives.*

[20] We find a candlestick for this candle in two celebrated authors:—
——Each star withdraws
His golden head, and burns within the socket. *Nero.*
A soul grown old and sunk into the socket. *Sebastian.*

Thumb. Like nothing but themselves.
Queen. [21] And sure thou art like nothing but thyself. [*Aside.*
King. Enough! the vast idea fills my soul.
I see them—yes, I see them now before me:
The monstrous, ugly, barb'rous sons of whores.
But ha! what form majestic strikes our eyes?
[22] So perfect, that it seems to have been drawn
By all the gods in council: so fair she is,
That surely at her birth the council paused,
And then at length cried out, This is a woman!
Thumb. Then were the gods mistaken—she is not
A woman, but a giantess——whom we,
[23] With much ado, have made a shift to hawl
Within the town: [24] for she is by a foot
Shorter than all her subject giants were.
Glum. We yesterday were both a queen and wife,
One hundred thousand giants owned our sway.
Twenty whereof were married to ourself.

[21] This simile occurs very frequently among the dramatic writers of both kinds.

[22] Mr. Lee hath stolen this thought from our author:

This perfect face, drawn by the gods in council,
Which they were long a making.
Luc. Jun. Brut.

——At his birth the heavenly council paused,
And then at last cried out, This is a man!

Dryden hath improved this hint to the utmost perfection:

So perfect, that the very gods who formed you wondered
At their own skill, and cried, A lucky hit
Has mended our design! Their envy hindered,
Or you had been immortal, and a pattern,
When Heaven would work for ostentation sake,
To copy out again. *All for Love.*

Banks prefers the works of Michael Angelo to that of the gods:

A pattern for the gods to make a man by,
Or Michael Angelo to form a statue.

[23] It is impossible, says Mr. W—, sufficiently to admire this natural easy line.

[24] This tragedy, which in most points resembles the ancients, differs from them in this—that it assigns the same honor to lowness of stature which they did to height. The gods and heroes in Homer and Virgil are continually described higher by the head than their followers, the contrary of which is observed by our author. In short, to exceed on either side is equally admirable; and a man of three foot is as wonderful a sight as a man of nine.

Queen. Oh! happy state of giantism where husbands
Like mushrooms grow, whilst hapless we are forced
To be content, nay, happy thought, with one.
Glum. But then to lose them all in one black day,
That the same sun which, rising, saw me wife
To twenty giants, setting should behold
Me widowed of them all.——[25] My worn-out heart,
That ship, leaks fast, and the great heavy lading,
My soul, will quickly sink.
Queen. Madam, believe
I view your sorrows with a woman's eye:
But learn to bear them with what strength you may,
To-morrow we will have our grenadiers
Drawn out before you, and you then shall choose
What husbands you think fit.
Glum. [26] Madam, I am
Your most obedient and most humble servant.
King. Think, mighty princess, think this court your own,
Nor think the landlord me, this house my inn;
Call for whate'er you will, you'll nothing pay.
[27] I feel a sudden pain within my breast,
Nor know I whether it arise from love
Or only the wind-colic. Time must show.
Oh Thumb! what do we to thy valor owe!
Ask some reward, great as we can bestow.
Thumb. [28] I ask not kingdoms, I can conquer those;
I ask not money, money I've enough;
For what I've done, and what I mean to do,
For giants slain, and giants yet unborn,
Which I will slay——if this be called a debt,
Take my receipt in full: I ask but this,—

[25] My blood leaks fast, and the great heavy lading
My soul will quickly sink. *Mithridates.*
My soul is like a ship. *Injured Love.*

[26] This well-bred line seems to be copied in the *Persian Princess*:—
To be your humblest and most faithful slave.

[27] This doubt of the king puts me in mind of a passage in the *Captives*, where the noise of feet is mistaken for the rustling of leaves.
——Methinks I hear
The sound of feet:
No; 'twas the wind that shook yon cypress boughs.

[28] Mr. Dryden seems to have had this passage in his eye in the first page of *Love Triumphant.*

[29] To sun myself in Huncamunca's eyes.
King. Prodigious bold request.
Queen. ——[30] Be still, my soul. [*Aside.*
Thumb. [31] My heart is at the threshold of your mouth,
And waits its answer there.——Oh! do not frown.
I've tried to reason's tune to tune my soul,
But love did overwind and crack the string.
Though Jove in thunder had cried out, YOU SHAN'T,
I should have loved her still——for oh, strange fate!
Then when I loved her least I loved her most!
King. It is resolved—the princess is your own.
Thumb. Oh! [32] happy, happy, happy, happy Thumb!
Queen. Consider, sir; reward your soldier's merit,
But give not Huncamunca to Tom Thumb.
King. Tom Thumb! Odzooks! my wide-extended realm
Knows not a name so glorious as Tom Thumb.
Let Macedonia Alexander boast,
Let Rome her Cæsars and her Scipios show,
Her Messieurs France, let Holland boast Mynheers,
Ireland her O's, her Macs let Scotland boast,
Let England boast no other than Tom Thumb.
Queen. Though greater yet his boasted merit was,
He shall not have my daughter, that is pos'.

[29] Don Carlos, in the *Revenge,* suns himself in the charms of his mistress:
While in the lustre of her charms I lay.

[30] A tragical phrase much in use.

[31] This speech hath been taken to pieces by several tragical authors, who seem to have rifled it, and shared its beauties among them.
My soul waits at the portal of thy breast,
To ravish from thy lips the welcome news.
Anne Bullen.
My soul stands listening at my ears.
Cyrus the Great.
Love to his tune my jarring heart would bring,
But reason overwinds, and cracks the string.
Duke of Guise.
————I should have loved,
Though Jove, in muttering thunder, had forbid it.
New Sophonisba.
And when it (*my heart*) wild resolves to love no more,
Then is the triumph of excessive love.
Ibid.

[32] Massinissa is one-fourth less happy than Tom Thumb.
Oh! happy, happy, happy! *New Sophonisba.*

King. Ha! sayest thou, Dollallolla?
Queen. I say he shan't.
King. [33] Then by our royal self we swear you lie.
Queen. [34] Who, but a dog, who, but a dog
Would use me as thou dost? Me, who have lain
[35] These twenty years so loving by thy side!
But I will be revenged. I'll hang myself.
Then tremble all who did this match persuade,
[31] For, riding on a cat, from high I'll fall,
And squirt down royal vengeance on you all.
Food. [37] Her majesty the queen is in a passion.
King. [38] Be she, or be she not, I'll to the girl
And pave thy way, oh Thumb.—Now by ourself,
We were indeed a pretty king of clouts
To truckle to her will.——For when by force
Or art the wife her husband over-reaches,
Give him the petticoat, and her the breeches.
Thumb. [39] Whisper ye winds, that Huncamunca's mine!
Echoes repeat, that Huncamunca's mine!
The dreadful business of the war is o'er,
And beauty, heavenly beauty! crowns my toils!
I've thrown the bloody garment now aside
And hymeneal sweets invite my bride.
So when some chimney-sweeper all the day
Hath through dark paths pursued the sooty way,
At night to wash his hands and face he flies,
And in his t'other shirt with his Brick-dusta lies.

[33] No, by myself. *Anne Bullen.*
[34] ————————Who caused
This dreadful revolution in my fate.
Ulamar. Who, but a dog—who, but a dog?
Liberty Ass.
[35] ————————A bride,
Who twenty years lay loving by your side.
Banks.
[36] For, borne upon a cloud, from high I'll fall,
And rain down royal vengeance on you all.
Alb. Queens.

[37] An information very like this we have in the *Tragedy of Love,* where, Cyrus having stormed in the most violent manner, Cyaxares observes very calmly,
Why, nephew Cyrus, you are moved.
[38] 'Tis in your choice.
Love me, or love me not.
Conquest of Granada.

[39] There is not one beauty in this charming speech but hath been borrowed by almost every tragic writer.

Scene IV

Grizzle (solus). [40] Where art thou, Grizzle? where are now thy glories?
Where are the drums that waken thee to honor?
Greatness is a laced coat from Monmouth-street,
Which fortune lends us for a day to wear,
To-morrow puts it on another's back.
The spiteful sun but yesterday surveyed
His rival high as Saint Paul's cupola;
Now may he see me as Fleet-ditch laid low.

Scene V

Queen, Grizzle.

Queen. [41] Teach me to scold, prodigious-minded Grizzle.
Mountain of treason, ugly as the devil,
Teach this confounded hateful mouth of mine
To spout forth words malicious as thyself,
Words which might shame all Billingsgate to speak.
Griz. Far be it from my pride to think my tongue
Your royal lips can in that art instruct,
Wherein you so excel. But may I ask,
Without offence, wherefore my queen would scold?
Queen. Wherefore? Oh! blood and thunder! ha'n't you heard
(What every corner of the court resounds)
That little Thumb will be a great man made?
Griz. I heard it. I confess—for who, alas!
[42] Can always stop his ears?—But would my teeth,
By grinding knives, had first been set on edge!
Queen. Would I had heard, at the still noon of night,
The hallalloo of fire in every street!
Odsbobs! I have a mind to hang myself,
To think I should a grandmother be made
By such a rascal!—Sure the king forgets
When in a pudding, by his mother put,
The bastard, by a tinker, on a stile
Was dropped.—O, good lord Grizzle! can I bear
To see him from a pudding mount the throne?
Or can, Oh can, my Huncamunca bear
To take a pudding's offspring to her arms?
Griz. Oh horror! horror! horror! cease, my queen.
[43] Thy voice, like twenty screech-owls, wracks my brain.
Queen. Then rouse thy spirit—we may yet prevent
This hated match.
Griz. ——We will; [44] nor fate itself,
Should it conspire with Thomas Thumb, should cause it.
I'll swim through seas; I'll ride upon the clouds;
I'll dig the earth; I'll blow out every fire;
I'll rave; I'll rant; I'll rise; I'll rush; I'll roar;
Fierce as the man whom [45] smiling dolphins bore
From the prosaic to poetic shore.
I'll tear the scoundrel into twenty pieces.
Queen. Oh, no! prevent the match, but hurt him not;
For, though I would not have him have my daughter,
Yet can we kill the man that killed the giants?
Griz. I tell you, madam, it was all a trick;
He made the giants first, and then he killed them;
As fox-hunters bring foxes to the wood,
And then with hounds they drive them out again.
Queen. How! have you seen no giants? Are there not
Now, in the yard, ten thousand proper giants?
Griz. [46] Indeed I cannot positively tell,

[40] Mr. Banks has (I wish I could not say too servilely) imitated this of Grizzle in his *Earl of Essex:*

Where art thou, Essex, &c.

[41] The countess of Nottingham, in the *Earl of Essex*, is apparently acquainted with Dollallolla.

[42] Grizzle was not probably possessed of that glue of which Mr. Banks speaks in his *Cyrus.*

I'll glue my ears to every word.

[43] Screech-owls, dark ravens, and amphibious monsters,
Are screaming in that voice.
Mary Queen of Scots.

[44] The reader may see all the beauties of this speech in a late ode, called the Naval Lyric.

[45] This epithet to a dolphin doth not give one so clear an idea as were to be wished; a smiling fish seeming a little more difficult to be imagined than a flying fish. Mr. Dryden is of opinion that smiling is the property of reason, and that no irrational creature can smile:

Smiles not allowed to beasts from reason move. *State of Innocence.*

[46] These lines are written in the same key with those in the *Earl of Essex:*

Why, sayest thou so? I love thee well, indeed
I do, and thou shalt find by this 'tis true.

But firmly do believe there is not one.
Queen. **Hence! from my sight! thou traitor, hie away;**
By all my stars! thou enviest Tom Thumb.
Go, sirrah! go,[47] hie away! hie!—thou art
A setting-dog: be gone.
Griz. **Madam, I go.**
Tom Thumb shall feel the vengeance you have raised.
So, when two dogs are fighting in the streets,
With a third dog one of the two dogs meets,
With angry teeth he bites him to the bone,
And this dog smarts for what that dog had done.

Scene VI

Queen (*sola*). **And whither shall I go?—Alack a day!**
I love Tom Thumb—but must not tell him so;
For what's a woman when her virtue's gone?
A coat without its lace; wig out of buckle;
A stocking with a hole in't——I can't live
Without my virtue, or without Tom Thumb.
[48] **Then let me weigh them in two equal scales;**
In this scale put my virtue, that Tom Thumb.
Alas! Tom Thumb is heavier than my virtue.
But hold!—perhaps I may be left a widow:
This match prevented, then Tom Thumb is mine:
In that dear hope I will forget my pain.

Or with this in *Cyrus:*

The most heroic mind that ever was.

And with above half of the modern tragedies.

[47] Aristotle, in that excellent work of his which is very justly styled his masterpiece, earnestly recommends using the terms of art, however coarse or even indecent they may be. Mr. Tate is of the same opinion.

Bru. Do not, like young hawks, fetch a course about:
Your game flies fair.
Fra. Do not fear it.
He answers you in your hawking phrase. *Injured Love.*

I think these two great authorities are sufficient to justify Dollallolla in the use of the phrase, "Hie away, hie!" when in the same line she says she is speaking to a setting-dog.

[48] We meet with such another pair of scales in Dryden's *King Arthur:*

Arthur and Oswald, and their different fates,
Are weighing now within the scales of heaven.

Also in *Sebastian:*

This hour my lot is weighing in the scales.

So, when some wench to Tothill Bridewell's sent,
With beating hemp and flogging she's content;
She hopes in time to ease her present pain,
At length is free, and walks the streets again.

ACT II.

Scene I

The Street.—Bailiff, Follower.

Bail. **Come on, my trusty follower, come on;**
This day discharge thy duty, and at night
A double mug of beer, and beer shall glad thee.
Stand here by me, this way must Noodle pass.
Fol. **No more, no more, oh Bailiff! every word**
Inspires my soul with virtue. Oh! I long
To meet the enemy in the street—and nab him:
To lay arresting hands upon his back,
And drag him trembling to the sponging-house.
Bail. **There when I have him, I will sponge upon him.**
[49] **Oh! glorious thought! by the sun, moon, and stars,**
I will enjoy it, though it be in thought!
Yes, yes, my follower, I will enjoy it.
Fol. **Enjoy it then some other time, for now**
Our prey approaches.
Bail. **Let us retire.**

Scene II

Tom Thumb, Noodle, Bailiff, Follower.

Thumb. **Trust me, my Noodle, I am wondrous sick;**
For, though I love the gentle Huncamunca,
Yet at the thought of marriage I grow pale:
For, oh! [50] **but swear thou'lt keep it ever secret,**
I will unfold a tale will make thee stare.

[49] Mr. Rowe is generally imagined to have taken some hints from this scene in his character of Bajazet; but as he, of all the tragic writers, bears the least resemblance to our author in his diction, I am unwilling to imagine he would condescend to copy him in this particular.

[50] This method of surprising an audience, by raising their expectation to the highest pitch, and then baulking it, hath been practised with great success by most of our tragical authors.

Nood. I swear by lovely Huncamunca's charms.
Thumb. Then know [51] my grandmamma hath often said,
Tom Thumb, beware of marriage.
Nood. Sir, I blush
To think a warrior, great in arms as you,
Should be affrighted by his grandmamma.
Can an old woman's empty dreams deter
The blooming hero from the virgin's arms?
Think of the joy that will your soul alarm,
When in her fond embraces clasped you lie,
While on her panting breast, dissolved in bliss,
You pour out all Tom Thumb in every kiss.
Thumb. Oh! Noodle, thou hast fired my eager soul
Spite of my grandmother she shall be mine;
I'll hug, caress, I'll eat her up with love:
Whole days, and nights, and years shall be too short
For our enjoyment; every sun shall rise
[52] Blushing to see us in our bed together.
Nood. Oh, sir! this purpose of your soul pursue.
Bail. Oh! sir! I have an action against you.
Nood. At whose suit is it?
Bail. At your tailor's, sir.
Your tailor put this warrant in my hands,
And I arrest you, sir, at his commands.
Thumb. Ha! dogs! Arrest my friend before my face!
Think you Tom Thumb will suffer this disgrace?
But let vain cowards threaten by their word,
Tom Thumb shall show his anger by his sword.
[*Kills the Bailiff and his Follower.*
Bail. Oh, I am slain!
Fol. I am murdered also
And to the shades, the dismal shades below,
My bailiff's faithful follower I go.
Nood. [53] Go then to hell, like rascals as you are,
And give our service to the bailiffs there.
Thumb. Thus perish all the bailiffs in the land,
Till debtors at noon-day shall walk the streets,
And no one fear a bailiff or his writ.

[51] Almeyda, in *Sebastian,* is in the same distress:

Sometimes methinks I hear the groan of ghosts,
Thin hollow sounds and lamentable screams;
Then, like a dying echo from afar,
My mother's voice that cries, Wed not, Almeyda;
Forewarned, Almeyda, marriage is thy crime.

[52] "As very well he may, if he hath any modesty in him," says Mr. D—s. The author of *Busiris* is extremely zealous to prevent the sun's blushing at any indecent object; and therefore on all such occasions he addresses himself to the sun, and desires him to keep out of the way.

Rise never more, O sun! let night prevail,
Eternal darkness close the world's wide scene. *Busiris.*

Sun, hide thy face, and put the world in mourning. *Ibid.*

Mr. Banks makes the sun perform the office of Hymen, and therefore not likely to be disgusted at such a sight:

The sun sets forth like a gay brideman with you. *Mary Queen of Scots.*

Scene III

The Princess Huncamunca's Apartment.—Huncamunca, Cleora, Mustacha.

Hunc. [54] Give me some music—see that it be sad.

Cleora *sings.*

I

Cupid, ease a love-sick maid,
Bring thy quiver to her aid;
With equal ardor wound the swain,
Beauty should never sigh in vain.

II

Let him feel the pleasing smart,
Drive thy arrow through his heart:
When one you wound, you then destroy;
When both you kill, you kill with joy.

Hunc. [55] O Tom Thumb! Tom Thumb! wherefore art thou Tom Thumb?
Why hadst thou not been born of royal race?
Why had not mighty Bantam been thy father?
Or else the king of Brentford, Old or New?
Must. I am surprised that your highness can give yourself a moment's uneasiness about that little insignificant fellow,[56] Tom

[53] Nourmahal sends the same message to heaven:

For I would have you when you upwards move,
Speak kindly of us to our friends above. *Aurengzebe.*

We find another "to hell," in the *Persian Princess:*

Villain, get thee down
To hell, and tell them that the fray's begun.

[54] Anthony gives the same command in the same words.

[55] Oh! Marius, Marius, wherefore art thou Marius? *Otway's Marius.*

[56] Nothing is more common than these seeming contradictions; such as,

Haughty weakness. *Victim.*
Great small world. *Noah's Flood.*

Thumb the Great—one properer for a plaything than a husband. Were he my husband his horns should be as long as his body. If you had fallen in love with a grenadier, I should not have wondered at it. If you had fallen in love with something; but to fall in love with nothing!

Hunc. Cease, my Mustacha, on thy duty cease.
The zephyr, when in flowery vales it plays,
Is not so soft, so sweet as Thummy's breath.
The dove is not so gentle to its mate.

Must. The dove is every bit as proper for a husband.—Alas! Madam, there's not a beau about the court looks so little like a man. He is a perfect butterfly, a thing without substance, and almost without shadow too.

Hunc. This rudeness is unseasonable: desist;
Or I shall think this railing comes from love.
Tom Thumb's a creature of that charming form,
That no one can abuse, unless they love him.

Must. Madam, the king.

Scene IV

King, Huncamunca.

King. Let all but Huncamunca leave the room. [*Exeunt* Cleora *and* Mustacha.
Daughter, I have observed of late some grief
Unusual in your countenance: your eyes
[57] That, like two open windows, used to show
The lovely beauty of the rooms within,
Have now two blinds before them. What is the cause?
Say, have you not enough of meat and drink?
We've given strict orders not to have you stinted.

Hunc. Alas! my lord, I value not myself
That once I eat two fowls and half a pig;
[58] Small is that praise! but oh! a maid may want
What she can neither eat nor drink.

King. What's that?

Hunc. O [59] spare my blushes; but I mean a husband.

King. If that be all, I have provided one,
A husband great in arms, whose warlike sword
Streams with the yellow blood of slaughter'd giants,
Whose name in Terra Incognita is known,
Whose valor, wisdom, virtue make a noise
Great as the kettle-drums of twenty armies.

Hunc. Whom does my royal father mean?

King. Tom Thumb.

Hunc. Is it possible?

King. Ha! the window-blinds are gone;
[60] A country-dance of joy is in your face.
Your eyes spit fire, your cheeks grow red as beef.

Hunc. O, there's a magic-music in that sound,
Enough to turn me into beef indeed!
Yes, I will own, since licensed by your word,
I'll own Tom Thumb the cause of all my grief.
For him I've sighed, I've wept, I've gnawed my sheets.

King. Oh! thou shalt gnaw thy tender sheets no more.
A husband thou shalt have to mumble now.

Hunc. Oh! happy sound! henceforth let no one tell
That Huncamunca shall lead apes in hell.
Oh! I am overjoyed!

---

and seems to place the chief happiness of a general therein:

Were but commanders half so well rewarded,
Then they might eat.

Banks's *Earl of Essex.*

But, if we may believe one who knows more than either, the devil himself, we shall find eating to be an affair of more moment than is generally imagined:

Gods are immortal only by their food.

Lucifer, in the *State of Innocence.*

[59] "This expression is enough of itself," says Mr. D—s, "utterly to destroy the character of Huncamunca!" Yet we find a woman of no abandoned character in Dryden adventuring farther, and thus excusing herself:

To speak our wishes first, forbid it pride,
Forbid it modesty; true, they forbid it,
But Nature does not. When we are athirst,
Or hungry, will imperious Nature stay,
Nor eat, nor drink, before 'tis bid fall on?

Cleomenes.

Cassandra speaks before she is asked: Huncamunca afterwards. Cassandra speaks her wishes to her lover: Huncamunca only to her father.

[60] Her eyes resistless magic bear;
Angels, I see, and gods are dancing there.

Lee's *Sophonisba.*

[57] Lee hath improved this metaphor:

Dost thou not view joy peeping from my eyes,
The casements opened wide to gaze on thee,
So Rome's glad citizens to windows rise,
When they some young triumpher fain would see. *Gloriana.*

[58] Almahide hath the same contempt for these appetites:

To eat and drink can no perfection be.

Conquest of Granada.

The Earl of Essex is of a different opinion,

King. I see thou art.
[61] Joy lightens in thy eyes, and thunders from thy brows;
Transports, like lightning, dart along thy soul,
As small-shot through a hedge.
Hunc. Oh! say not small.
King. This happy news shall on our tongue ride post,
Ourself we bear the happy news to Thumb.
Yet think not, daughter, that your powerful charms
Must still detain the hero from his arms;
Various his duty, various his delight;
Now is his turn to kiss, and now to fight,
And now to kiss again. So, mighty [62] Jove,
When with excessive thundering tired above,
Comes down to earth, and takes a bit—and then
Flies to his trade of thundering back again.

Scene V

Grizzle, Huncamunca.

[63] *Griz.* Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!
Thy pouting breasts, like kettle-drums of brass,
Beat everlasting loud alarms of joy;
As bright as brass they are, and oh, as hard.
Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!
Hunc. Ha! dost thou know me, princess as I am,

[61] Mr. Dennis, in that excellent tragedy called *Liberty Asserted*, which is thought to have given so great a stroke to the late French king, hath frequent imitations of this beautiful speech of king Arthur:

Conquest lightening in his eyes, and thundering in his arm.
Joy lightened in her eyes.
Joys like lightning dart along my soul.

[62] Jove, with excessive thundering tired above,
Comes down for ease, enjoys a nymph, and then
Mounts dreadful, and to thundering goes again. *Gloriana.*

[63] This beautiful line, which ought, says Mr. W—, to be written in gold, is imitated in the *New Sophonisba:*

Oh! Sophonisba; Sophonisba, oh!
Oh! Narva; Narva, oh!

The author of a song called *Duke upon Duke* hath improved it:

Alas! O Nick! O Nick, alas!

Where, by the help of a little false spelling, you have two meanings in the repeated words.

[64] That thus of me you dare to make your game?
Griz. Oh! Huncamunca, well I know that you
A princess are, and a king's daughter, too;
But love no meanness scorns, no grandeur fears;
Love often lords into the cellar bears,
And bids the sturdy porter come up stairs.
For what's too high for love, or what's too low?
Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!
Hunc. But, granting all you say of love were true,
My love, alas! is to another due.
In vain to me a suitoring you come,
For I'm already promised to Tom Thumb.
Griz. And can my princess such a durgen wed?
One fitter for your pocket than your bed!
Advised by me, the worthless baby shun,
Or you will ne'er be brought to bed of one.
Oh take me to thy arms, and never flinch,
Who am a man, by Jupiter! every inch.
[65] Then, while in joys together lost we lie,
I'll press thy soul while gods stand wishing by.
Hunc. If, sir, what you insinuate you prove,
All obstacles of promise you remove;
For all engagements to a man must fall,
Whene'er that man is proved no man at all.
Griz. Oh! let him seek some dwarf, some fairy miss,
Where no joint-stool must lift him to the kiss!
But, by the stars and glory! you appear
Much fitter for a Prussian grenadier;
One globe alone on Atlas' shoulders rests,
Two globes are less than Huncamunca's breasts;
The milky way is not so white, that's flat,
And sure thy breasts are full as large as that.
Hunc. Oh, sir, so strong your eloquence I find,
It is impossible to be unkind.
Griz. Ah! speak that o'er again; and let the [66] sound

[64] Edith, in the *Bloody Brother*, speaks to her lover in the same familiar language:

Your grace is full of game.

[65] Traverse the glittering chambers of the sky,
Borne on a cloud in view of fate I'll lie,
And press her soul while gods stand wishing by. *Hannibal.*

[66] Let the four winds from distant corners meet,
And on their wings first bear it into France;
Then back again to Edina's proud walls,
Till victim to the sound th' aspiring city falls. *Albion Queens.*

From one pole to another pole rebound;
The earth and sky each be a battledore,
And keep the sound, that shuttlecock, up an hour:
To Doctors-Commons for a licence I
Swift as an arrow from a bow will fly.
Hunc. **Oh, no! lest some disaster we should meet,**
'Twere better to be married at the Fleet.
Griz. **Forbid it, all ye powers, a princess should**
By that vile place contaminate her blood;
My quick return shall to my charmer prove
I travel on the [67] post-horses of love.
Hunc. **Those post-horses to me will seem too slow**
Though they should fly swift as the gods, when they
Ride on behind that post-boy, Opportunity.

Scene VI

Tom Thumb, Huncamunca.

Thumb. **Where is my princess? where's my Huncamunca?**
Where are those eyes, those cardmatches of love,
That [68] light up all with love my waxen soul?
Where is that face which artful nature made
[69] In the same moulds where Venus' self was cast?

[67] I do not remember any metaphors so frequent in the tragic poets as those borrowed from riding post:

The gods and opportunity ride post.
Hannibal.
——Let's rush together,
For death rides post:
Duke of Guise.
Destruction gallops to thy murder post.
Gloriana.

[68] This image, too, very often occurs:

——Bright as when thy eye
First lighted up our loves. *Aurengzebe.*
'Tis not a crown alone lights up my name.
Busiris.

[69] There is great dissension among the poets concerning the method of making man. One tells his mistress that the mould she was made in being lost, Heaven cannot form such another. Lucifer, in Dryden, gives a merry description of his own formation:

Whom heaven, neglecting, made and scarce designed,
But threw me in for number to the rest.
State of Innocence.

In one place the same poet supposes man to be made of metal:

Hunc. [70] **Oh! what is music to the ear that's deaf,**
Or a goose-pie to him that has no taste?
What are these praises now to me, since I
Am promised to another?
Thumb. **Ha! promised?**
Hunc. **Too sure; 'tis written in the book of fate.**
Thumb. [71] **Then I will tear away the leaf**
Wherein it's writ; or, if fate won't allow
So large a gap within its journal-book,
I'll blot it out at least.

Scene VII

Glumdalca, Tom Thumb, Huncamunca.

Glum. [72] **I need not ask if you are Huncamunca,**
Your brandy-nose proclaims——

I was formed
Of that coarse metal which, when she was made,
The gods threw by for rubbish.
In another of dough: *All for Love.*
When the gods moulded up the paste of man,
Some of their clay was left upon their hands,
And so they made Egyptians. *Cleomenes.*
In another of clay:
——Rubbish of remaining clay. *Sebastian.*
One makes the soul of wax:
Her waxen soul begins to melt apace.
Anne Bullen.
Another of flint:
Sure our two souls have somewhere been acquainted
In former beings, or, struck out together,
One spark to Afric flew, and one to Portugal.
Sebastian.

To omit the great quantities of iron, brazen, and leaden souls which are so plenty in modern authors—I cannot omit the dress of a soul as we find it in Dryden:

Souls shirted but with air. *King Arthur.*

Nor can I pass by a particular sort of soul in a particular sort of description in the *New Sophonisba.*

Ye mysterious powers,
——Whether through your gloomy depths I wander,
Or on the mountains walk, give me the calm,
The steady smiling soul, where wisdom sheds
Eternal sunshine, and eternal joy.

[70] This line Mr. Banks has plundered entire in his *Anne Bullen.*

[71] Good Heaven! the book of fate before me lay,
But to tear out the journal of that day.
Or, if the order of the world below
Will not the gap of one whole day allow,
Give me that minute when she made her vow. *Conquest of Granada.*

[72] I know some of the commentators have imagined that Mr. Dryden, in the altercative

Hunc. I am a princess;
Nor need I ask who you are.
Glum. A giantess;
The queen of those who made and unmade queens.
Hunc. The man whose chief ambition is to be
My sweetheart hath destroyed these mighty giants.
Glum. Your sweetheart? Dost thou think the man who once
Hath worn my easy chains will e'er wear thine?
Hunc. Well may your chains be easy, since, if fame
Says true, they have been tried on twenty husbands.
[73] The glove or boot, so many times pulled on,
May well sit easy on the hand or foot.
Glum. I glory in the number, and when I
Sit poorly down, like thee, content with one,
Heaven change this face for one as bad as thine.
Hunc. Let me see nearer what this beauty is
That captivates the heart of men by scores.
[*Holds a candle to her face.*
Oh! Heaven, thou art as ugly as the devil.
Glum. You'd give the best of shoes within your shop
To be but half so handsome.
Hunc. Since you come
[74] To that, I'll put my beauty to the test:
Tom Thumb, I'm yours, if you with me will go.

Glum. Oh! stay, Tom Thumb, and you alone shall fill
That bed where twenty giants used to lie.
Thumb. In the balcony that o'erhangs the stage,
I've seen a whore two 'prentices engage;
One half-a-crown does in his fingers hold,
The other shows a little piece of gold;
She the half-guinea wisely does purloin,
And leaves the larger and the baser coin.
Glum. Left, scorned, and loathed for such a chit as this;
[75] I feel the storm that's rising in my mind,
Tempests and whirlwinds rise, and roll, and roar.
I'm all within a hurricane, as if
[76] The world's four winds were pent within my carcase.
[77] Confusion, horror, murder, guts, and death!

Scene VIII

King, Glumdalca.

King. [78] Sure never was so sad a king as I!
[79] My life is worn as ragged as a coat
A beggar wears; a prince should put it off.
[80] To love a captive and a giantess!
Oh love! oh love! how great a king art thou!
My tongue's thy trumpet, and thou trumpetest,
Unknown to me, within me. [81] Oh, Glumdalca!
Heaven thee designed a giantess to make,
But an angelic soul was shuffled in.
[82] I am a multitude of walking griefs,

scene between Cleopatra and Octavia, a scene which Mr. Addison inveighs against with great bitterness, is much beholden to our author. How just this their observation is I will not presume to determine.

[73] "A cobbling poet indeed," says Mr. D.; and yet I believe we may find as monstrous images in the tragic authors: I'll put down one:

Untie your folded thoughts, and let them
dangle loose as a bride's hair.
Injured Love.

Which line seems to have as much title to a milliner's shop as our author's to a shoemaker's.

[74] Mr. L— takes occasion in this place to commend the great care of our author to preserve the metre of blank verse, in which Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher were so notoriously negligent; and the moderns, in imitation of our author, so laudably observant:

Then does
Your majesty believe that he can be
A traitor? *Earl of Essex.*

Every page of *Sophonisba* gives us instances of this excellence.

[75] Love mounts and rolls about my stormy mind. *Aurengzebe.*
Tempests and whirlwinds through my bosom move. *Cleomenes.*
[76] With such a furious tempest on his brow,
As if the world's four winds were pent within
His blustering carcase. *Anne Bullen.*

[77] Verba Tragica.

[78] This speech has been terribly mauled by the poet.

[79] ——My life is worn to rags,
Not worth a prince's wearing.
Love Triumphant.

[80] Must I beg the pity of my slave?
Must a king beg? But love's a greater king,
A tyrant, nay, a devil, that possesses me.
He tunes the organ of my voice and speaks,
Unknown to me, within me. *Sebastian.*

[81] When thou wert formed heaven did a man begin;
But a brute soul by chance was shuffled in.
Aurengzebe.

[82] I am a multitude
Of walking griefs.
New Sophonisba.

And only on her lips the balm is found
[83] **To spread a plaster that might cure them all.**
Glum. **What do I hear?**
King. **What do I see?**
Glum. **Oh!**
King. **Ah!**
[84] *Glum.* **Ah! wretched queen!**
King. **Oh! wretched king!**
[85] *Glum.* **Ah!**
King. **Oh!**

Scene IX

Tom Thumb, Huncamunca, Parson.

Par. **Happy's the wooing that's not long a doing;**
For, if I guess right, Tom Thumb this night
Shall give a being to a new Tom Thumb.
Thumb. **It shall be my endeavor so to do.**
Hunc. **Oh! fie upon you, sir, you make me blush.**
Thumb. **It is the virgin's sign, and suits you well:**
[86] **I know not where, nor how, nor what I am;**
[87] **I'm so transported, I have lost myself.**

[83] I will take thy scorpion blood,
And lay it to my grief till I have ease.
Anne Bullen.

[84] Our author, who everywhere shows his great penetration into human nature, here outdoes himself: where a less judicious poet would have raised a long scene of whining love, he, who understood the passions better, and that so violent an affection as this must be too big for utterance, chooses rather to send his characters off in this sullen and doleful manner, in which admirable conduct he is imitated by the author of the justly celebrated *Eurydice*. Dr. Young seems to point at this violence of passion:

——Passion chokes
Their words, and they're the statues of despair.

And Seneca tells us, "Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent." The story of the Egyptian king in Herodotus is too well known to need to be inserted; I refer the more curious reader to the excellent Montaigne, who hath written an essay on this subject.

[85] To part is death.
'Tis death to part.
Ah!
Oh!
Don Carlos.

[86] Nor know I whether
What am I, who, or where.
Busiris.

I was I know not what, and am I know not how. *Gloriana.*

[87] To understand sufficiently the beauty of this passage, it will be necessary that we comprehend every man to contain two selfs. I shall not attempt to prove this from philosophy, which the poets make so plainly evident.

One runs away from the other:

——Let me demand your majesty,
Why fly you from yourself?
Duke of Guise.

In a second, one self is a guardian to the other:

Leave me the care of me.
Conquest of Granada.

Again:

Myself am to myself less near.
Ibid.

In the same, the first self is proud of the second:

I myself am proud of me.
State of Innocence.

In a third, distrustful of him:

Fain I would tell, but whisper it in my ear,
That none besides might hear, nay, not myself. *Earl of Essex.*

In a fourth, honors him:

I honor Rome,
And honor too myself.
Sophonisba.

In a fifth, at variance with him:

Leave me not thus at variance with myself.
Busirts.

Again, in a sixth:

I find myself divided from myself.
Medea.

She seemed the sad effigies of herself.
Banks.

Assist me, Zulema, if thou wouldst be
The friend thou seemest, assist me against me. *Albion Queens.*

From all which it appears that there are two selfs; and therefore Tom Thumb's losing himself is no such solecism as it hath been represented by men rather ambitious of criticising than qualified to criticise.

Hunc. **Forbid it, all ye stars, for you're so small,**
That were you lost, you'd find yourself no more.
So the unhappy sempstress once, they say,
Her needle in a pottle, lost, of hay;
In vain she looked, and looked, and made her moan,
For ah, the needle was for ever gone.
Par. **Long may they live, and love, and propagate,**
Till the whole land be peopled with Tom Thumbs!
[88] **So, when the Cheshire cheese a maggot breeds,**
Another and another still succeeds:

[88] Mr. F— imagines this parson to have been a Welsh one, from his simile.

By thousands and ten thousands they increase,
Till one continued maggot fills the rotten cheese.

Scene X

Noodle, *and then* Grizzle.

Nood. [89] **Sure, Nature means to break her solid chain,**
Or else unfix the world, and in a rage
To hurl it from its axletree and hinges;
All things are so confused, the king's in love,
The queen is drunk, the princess married is.
Griz. **Oh, Noodle! Hast thou Huncamunca seen?**
Nood. **I've seen a thousand sights this day, where none**
Are by the wonderful bitch herself outdone.
The king, the queen, and all the court, are sights.
Griz. [90] **D—n your delay, you trifler! are you drunk, ha?**
I will not hear one word but Huncamunca.
Nood. **By this time she is married to Tom Thumb.**
Griz. [91] **My Huncamunca!**
Nood. **Your Huncamunca,**
Tom Thumb's Huncamunca, every man's Huncamunca.
Griz. **If this be true, all womankind are damned.**
Nood. **If it be not, may I be so myself.**
Griz. **See where she comes! I'll not believe a word**
Against that face, upon whose [92] **ample brow**
Sits innocence with majesty enthroned.

Grizzle, Huncamunca.

Griz. **Where has my Huncamunca been? See here.**
The licence in my hand!

Hunc. **Alas! Tom Thumb.**
Griz. **Why dost thou mention him?**
Hunc. **Ah, me! Tom Thumb.**
Griz. **What means my lovely Huncamunca?**
Hunc. **Hum!**
Griz. **Oh! speak.**
Hunc. **Hum!**
Griz. **Ha! your every word is hum:**
[93] **You force me still to answer you, Tom Thumb.**
Tom Thumb—I'm on the rack—I'm in a flame.
[94] **Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb—you love the name;**
So pleasing is that sound, that, were you dumb,
You still would find a voice to cry Tom Thumb.
Hunc. **Oh! be not hasty to proclaim my doom!**
My ample heart for more than one has room:
A maid like me Heaven formed at least for two.
[95] **I married him, and now I'll marry you.**
Griz. **Ha! dost thou own thy falsehood to my face?**
Thinkest thou that I will share thy husband's place?
Since to that office one cannot suffice,
And since you scorn to dine one single dish on,
Go, get your husband put into commission.
Commissioners to discharge (ye gods! it fine is)
The duty of a husband to your highness.
Yet think not long I will my rival bear,
Or unrevenged the slighted willow wear;
The gloomy, brooding tempest, now confined
Within the hollow caverns of my mind,
In dreadful whirl shall roll along the coasts,
Shall thin the land of all the men it boasts,
[96] **And cram up every chink of hell with ghosts.**

[89] Our author hath been plundered here, according to custom:

Great Nature, break thy chain that links together
The fabric of the world, and make a chaos
Like that within my soul. *Love Triumphant.*

——Startle Nature, unfix the globe,
And hurl it from its axletree and hinges.
Albion Queens.

The tottering earth seems sliding off its props.

[90] D—n your delay, ye torturers, proceed;
I will not hear one word but Almahide.
Conquest of Granada.

[91] Mr. Dryden hath imitated this in *All for Love.*

[92] This Miltonic style abounds in the *New Sophonisba:*

——And on her ample brow
Sat majesty.

[93] Your every answer still so ends in that,
You force me still to answer you Morat.
Aurengzebe.

[94] Morat, Morat, Morat! you love the name.
Ibid.

[95] "Here is a sentiment for the virtuous Huncamunca!" says Mr. D—s. And yet, with the leave of this great man, the virtuous Panthea, in *Cyrus,* hath an heart every whit as ample:

For two I must confess are gods to me,
Which is my Abradatus first, and thee.
Cyrus the Great.

Nor is the lady in *Love Triumphant* more reserved, though not so intelligible:

I am so divided,
That I grieve most for both, and love both most.

[96] A ridiculous supposition to any one who considers the great and extensive largeness

[97] **So have I seen, in some dark winter's day,**
A sudden storm rush down the sky's highway,
Sweep through the streets with terrible ding-dong,
Gush through the spouts, and wash whole crowds along.
The crowded shops the thronging vermin screen,
Together cram the dirty and the clean,
And not one shoe-boy in the street is seen.
Hunc. **Oh, fatal rashness! should his fury slay**
My hapless bridegroom on his wedding-day,
I, who this morn of two chose which to wed,
May go again this night alone to bed.
[98] **So have I seen some wild unsettled fool,**
Who had her choice of this and that joint-stool,
To give the preference to either loth,
And fondly coveting to sit on both,
While the two stools her sitting-part confound.
Between 'em both fall squat upon the ground.

of hell, says a commentator; but not so to those who consider the great expansion of immaterial substance. Mr. Banks makes one soul to be so expanded, that heaven could not contain it:

The heavens are all too narrow for her soul.
Virtue Betrayed.

The *Persian Princess* hath a passage not unlike the author of this:

We will send such shoals of murdered slaves,
Shall glut hell's empty regions.

This threatens to fill hell, even though it were empty: Lord Grizzle, only to fill up the chinks, supposing the rest already full.

[97] Mr. Addison is generally thought to have had this simile in his eye when he wrote that beautiful one at the end of the third act of his *Cato*.

[98] This beautiful simile is founded on a proverb which does honor to the English language:

Between two stools the breech falls to the ground.

I am not so well pleased with any written remains of the ancients as with those little aphorisms which verbal tradition hath delivered down to us under the title of proverbs. It were to be wished that, instead of filling their pages with the fabulous theology of the pagans, our modern poets would think it worth their while to enrich their works with the proverbial sayings of their ancestors. Mr. Dryden hath chronicled one in heroic:

Two ifs scarce make one possibility.
Conquest of Granada.

My Lord Bacon is of opinion that, whatever is known of arts and sciences might be proved to have lurked in the Proverbs of Solomon. I am of the same opinion in relation to those above mentioned; at least I am confident that a more perfect system of ethics, as well as economy, might be compiled out of them than is at present extant, either in the works of the ancient philosophers, or those more valuable, as more voluminous ones of the modern divines.

ACT III

Scene I

King Arthur's *Palace.*

[99] *Ghost* (*solus*). **Hail! ye black horrors of midnight's midnoon!**
Ye fairies, goblins, bats, and screech-owls, hail!
And, oh! ye mortal watchmen, whose hoarse throats
The immortal ghosts' dread croakings counterfeit,
All hail!—Ye dancing phantoms, who, by day,
Are some condemned to fast, some feast in fire,
Now play in churchyards, skipping o'er the graves,
To the [100] loud music of the silent bell,
All hail!

[99] Of all the particulars in which the modern stage falls short of the ancient, there is none so much to be lamented as the great scarcity of ghosts in the latter. Whence this proceeds I will not presume to determine. Some are of opinion that the moderns are unequal to that sublime language which a ghost ought to speak. One says, ludicrously, that ghosts are out of fashion; another that they are properer for comedy; forgetting, I suppose, that Aristotle hath told us that a ghost is the soul of tragedy; for so I render the ψυχὴ ὁ μῦθος τῆς τραγωδίας which M. Dacier, amongst others, hath mistaken; I suppose misled by not understanding the Fabula of the Latins, which signifies a ghost as well as a fable.

"Te premet nox, fabulæque manes."
Horace.

Of all the ghosts that have ever appeared on the stage, a very learned and judicious foreign critic gives the preference to this of our author. These are his words, speaking of this tragedy:—"Nec quidquam in illâ admirabilius quàm phasma quoddam horrendum, quod omnibus aliis spectris, quibuscum scatet Angelorum tragœdia, longè (pace D—ysii V. Doctiss. dixerim) prætulerim."

[100] We have already given instances of this figure.

Scene II

King *and* Ghost.

King. **What noise is this? What villain dares,**
At this dread hour, with feet and voice profane,
Disturb our royal walls?
Ghost. **One who defies**
Thy empty power to hurt him; [101] **one who dares**
Walk in thy bedchamber.
King. **Presumptuous slave!**
Thou diest.
Ghost. **Threaten others with that word:**
[102] **I am a ghost, and am already dead.**
King. **Ye stars! 'tis well. Were thy last hour to come,**
This moment had been it; [103] **yet by thy shroud**
I'll pull thee backward, squeeze thee to a bladder,
Till thou dost groan thy nothingness away.
Thou flyest! 'Tis well. [*Ghost retires.*
[104] **I thought what was the courage of a ghost!**

[101] Almanzor reasons in the same manner:

A ghost I'll be;
And from a ghost, you know, no place is free. *Conquest of Granada.*

[102] "The man who writ this wretched pun," says Mr. D., "would have picked your pocket:" which he proceeds to show not only bad in itself, but doubly so on so solemn an occasion. And yet, in that excellent play of *Liberty Asserted,* we find something very much resembling a pun in the mouth of a mistress, who is parting with the lover she is fond of:

Ul. Oh, mortal woe! one kiss, and then farewell.
Irene. The gods have given to others to fare well.

O! miserably must Irene fare.
Agamemnon, in the *Victim,* is full as facetious on the most solemn occasion—that of sacrificing his daughter:

Yes, daughter, yes; you will assist the priest;
Yes, you must offer up your—vows for Greece.

[103] I'll pull thee backwards by thy shroud to light,
Or else I'll squeeze thee, like a bladder, there,
And make thee groan thyself away to air. *Conquest of Granada.*

Snatch me, ye gods, this moment into nothing. *Cyrus the Great.*

[104] So, art thou gone? Thou canst no conquest boast.
I thought what was the courage of a ghost. *Conquest of Granada.*

Yet, dare not, on thy life—Why say I that,
Since life thou hast not?—Dare not walk again
Within these walls, on pain of the Red Sea.
For, if henceforth I ever find thee here,
As sure, sure as a gun, I'll have thee laid——
Ghost. **Were the Red Sea a sea of Holland's gin,**
The liquor (when alive) whose very smell
I did detest, did loathe—yet, for the sake
Of Thomas Thumb, I would be laid therein.
King. **Ha! said you?**
Ghost. **Yes, my liege, I said Tom Thumb,**
Whose father's ghost I am—once not unknown
To mighty Arthur. But, I see, 'tis true,
The dearest friend, when dead, we all forget.
King. **'Tis he—it is the honest Gaffer Thumb.**
Oh! let me press thee in my eager arms,
Thou best of ghosts! thou something more than ghost!
Ghost. **Would I were something more, that we again**
Might feel each other in the warm embrace.
But now I have the advantage of my king,
[105] **For I feel thee, whilst thou dost not feel me.**
King. **But say,** [106] **thou dearest air, Oh! say what dread,**
Important business sends thee back to earth?
Ghost. **Oh! then prepare to hear—which but to hear**
Is full enough to send thy spirit hence.
Thy subjects up in arms, by Grizzle led,
Will, ere the rosy-fingered morn shall ope
The shutters of the sky, before the gate
Of this thy royal palace, swarming spread.
[107] **So have I seen the bees in clusters swarm,**
So have I seen the stars in frosty nights,
So have I seen the sand in windy days,
So have I seen the ghosts on Pluto's shore,
So have I seen the flowers in spring arise,
So have I seen the leaves in autumn fall,
So have I seen the fruits in summer smile,
So have I seen the snow in winter frown.

King Arthur seems to be as brave a fellow as Almanzor, who says most heroically,

In spite of ghosts I'll on.

[105] The ghost of Lausaria, in *Cyrus,* is a plain copy of this, and is therefore worth reading:

Ah, Cyrus!
Thou mayest as well grasp water, or fleet air,
As think of touching my immortal shade. *Cyrus the Great.*

[106] Thou better part of heavenly air. *Conquest of Granada.*

[107] "A string of similes," says one, "proper to be hung up in the cabinet of a prince."

King. D—n all thou hast seen! dost thou, beneath the shape
Of Gaffer Thumb, come hither to abuse me
With similes, to keep me on the rack?
Hence—or, by all the torments of thy hell,
[108] I'll run thee through the body, though thou'st none.
Ghost. Arthur, beware! I must this moment hence,
Not frighted by your voice, but by the cocks!
Arthur beware, beware, beware, beware!
Strive to avert thy yet impending fate;
For, if thou'rt killed to-day,
To-morrow all thy care will come too late.

Scene III

King, *solus.*

King. Oh! stay, and leave me not uncertain thus!
And, whilst thou tellest me what's like my fate,
Oh! teach me how I may avert it too!
Cursed be the man who first a simile made!
Cursed every bard who writes!—So have I seen
Those whose comparisons are just and true,
And those who liken things not like at all.
The devil is happy that the whole creation
Can furnish out no simile to his fortune.

Scene IV

King, Queen.

Queen. What is the cause, my Arthur, that you steal
Thus silently from Dollallolla's breast?
Why dost thou leave me in the [109] dark alone,
When well thou knowest I am afraid of sprites?
King. Oh, Dollallolla! do not blame my love!
I hoped the fumes of last night's punch had laid
Thy lovely eyelids fast.—But, oh! I find
There is no power in drams to quiet wives;
Each morn, as the returning sun, they wake,
And shine upon their husbands.

[108] This passage hath been understood several different ways by the commentators. For my part, I find it difficult to understand it at all. Mr. Dryden says—

I've heard something how two bodies meet,
But how two souls join I know not.

So that, till the body of a spirit be better understood, it will be difficult to understand how it is possible to run him through it.

[109] Cydaria is of the same fearful temper with Dollallolla.

I never durst in darkness be alone.
Indian Emperor.

Queen. Think, Oh think!
What a surprise it must be to the sun,
Rising, to find the vanished world away.
What less can be the wretched wife's surprise
When, stretching out her arms to fold thee fast,
She folds her useless bolster in her arms.
[110] Think, think, on that.—Oh! think, think well on that!
I do remember also to have read
[111] In Dryden's Ovid's Metamorphoses,
That Jove in form inanimate did lie
With beauteous Danaë: and, trust me, love,
[112] I feared the bolster might have been a Jove.
King. Come to my arms, most virtuous of thy sex;
Oh, Dollallolla! were all wives like thee,
So many husbands never had worn horns.
Should Huncamunca of thy worth partake,
Tom Thumb indeed were blest.—Oh, fatal name!
For didst thou know one quarter what I know,
Then wouldst thou know—Alas! what thou wouldst know!
Queen. What can I gather hence? Why dost thou speak
Like men who carry rareeshows about?
"Now you shall see, gentlemen, what you shall see."
O, tell me more, or thou hast told too much.

Scene V

King, Queen, Noodle.

Nood. Long life attend your majesties serene,
Great Arthur, king, and Dollallolla, queen!
Lord Grizzle, with a bold rebellious crowd,
Advances to the palace, threatening loud,
Unless the princess be delivered straight,
And the victorious Thumb, without his pate,
They are resolved to batter down the gate.

Scene VI

King, Queen, Huncamunca, Noodle.

King. See where the princess comes! Where is Tom Thumb?

[110] Think well of this, think that, think every way. *Sophonisba.*

[111] These quotations are more usual in the comic than in the tragic writers.

[112] "This distress," says Mr. D—, "I must allow to be extremely beautiful, and tends to heighten the virtuous character of Dollallolla, who is so exceeding delicate, that she is in the highest apprehension from the inanimate embrace of a bolster. An example worthy of imitation for all our writers of tragedy."

Hunc. **Oh! sir, about an hour and half ago**
He sallied out to encounter with the foe,
And swore, unless his fate had him misled,
From Grizzle's shoulders to cut off his head,
And serve't up with your chocolate in bed.
King. **'Tis well, I found one devil told us both.**
Come, Dollallolla, Huncamunca, come;
Within we'll wait for the victorious Thumb:
In peace and safety we secure may stay,
While to his arm we trust the bloody fray;
Though men and giants should conspire with gods,
[113] **He is alone equal to all these odds.**
Queen. **He is, indeed,** [114] **a helmet to us all;**
While he supports we need not fear to fall;
His arm dispatches all things to our wish,
And serves up every foe's head in a dish.

[113] "Credat Judæus Appella,
Non ego,"
says Mr. D—. "For, passing over the absurdity of being equal to odds, can we possibly suppose a little insignificant fellow—I say again, a little insignificant fellow—able to vie with a strength which all the Samsons and Herculeses of antiquity would be unable to encounter?" I shall refer this incredulous critic to Mr. Dryden's defence of his Almanzor; and, lest that should not satisfy him, I shall quote a few lines from the speech of a much braver fellow than Almanzor, Mr. Johnson's Achilles:
Though human race rise in embattled hosts,
To force her from my arms—Oh! son of Atreus!
By that immortal power, whose deathless spirit
Informs this earth, I will oppose them all.
Victim.

[114] "I have heard of being supported by a staff," says Mr. D., "but never of being supported by an helmet." I believe he never heard of sailing with wings, which he may read in no less a poet than Mr. Dryden:
Unless we borrow wings, and sail through air. *Love Triumphant.*
What will he say to a kneeling valley?
———I'll stand
Like a safe valley, that low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain. *Injured Love.*
I am ashamed of so ignorant a carper, who doth not know that an epithet in tragedy is very often no other than an expletive. Do not we read in the *New Sophonisba* of "grinding chains, blue plagues, white occasions, and blue serenity?" Nay, it is not the adjective only, but sometimes half a sentence is put by way of expletive, as, "Beauty pointed high with spirit," in the same play; and, "In the lap of blessing, to be most curst," in the *Revenge.*

Void is the mistress of the house of care,
While the good cook presents the bill of fare;
Whether the cod, that northern king of fish,
Or duck, or goose, or pig, adorn the dish,
No fears the number of her guests afford,
But at her hour she sees the dinner on the board.

Scene VII

A Plain.—Grizzle, Foodle, *and Rebels.*

Griz. **Thus far our arms with victory are crowned;**
For, though we have not fought, yet we have found
[115] **No enemy to fight withal.**
Food. **Yet I,**
Methinks, would willingly avoid this day,
[116] **This first of April, to engage our foes.**
Griz. **This day, of all the days of the year, I'd choose,**
For on this day my grandmother was born.
Gods! I will make Tom Thumb an April-fool;
[117] **Will teach his wit an errand it ne'er knew,**
And send it post to the Elysian shades.
Food. **I'm glad to find our army is so stout,**
Nor does it move my wonder less than joy.
Griz. [118] **What friends we have, and how we came so strong,**
I'll softly tell you as we march along.

Scene VIII

Thunder and Lightning.—Tom Thumb, Glumdalca, *cum suis.*

Thumb. **Oh, Noodle! hast thou seen a day like this?**
[119] **The unborn thunder rumbles o'er our heads,**

[115] A victory like that of Almanzor:
Almanzor is victorious without fight.
Conquest of Granada.

[116] Well have we chose an happy day for fight;
For every man, in course of time, has found
Some days are lucky, some unfortunate.
King Arthur.

[117] We read of such another in Lee:
Teach his rude wit a flight she never made,
And send her post to the Elysian shade.
Gloriana.

[118] These lines are copied verbatim in the *Indian Emperor.*

[119] Unborn thunder rolling in a cloud.
Conquest of Granada.

[120] **As if the gods meant to unhinge the world;**
And heaven and earth in wild confusion hurl;
Yet will I boldly tread the tottering ball.
Merl. **Tom Thumb!**
Thumb. **What voice is this I hear?**
Merl. **Tom Thumb!**
Thumb. **Again it calls.**
Merl. **Tom Thumb!**
Glum. **It calls again.**
Thumb. **Appear, whoe'er thou art; I fear thee not.**
Merl. **Thou hast no cause to fear, I am thy friend,**
Merlin by name, a conjurer by trade,
And to my art thou dost thy being owe.
Thumb. **How!**
Merl. **Hear then the mystic getting of Tom Thumb.**

[121] His father was a ploughman plain,
His mother milked the cow;
And yet the way to get a son
This couple knew not how.
Until such time the good old man
To learned Merlin goes,
And there to him, in great distress,
In secret manner shows;
How in his heart he wished to have
A child, in time to come,
To be his heir, though it may be
No bigger than his thumb:
Of which old Merlin was foretold
That he his wish should have;
And so a son of stature small
The charmer to him gave.

Thou'st heard the past, look up and see the future.
Thumb. [122] **Lost in amazement's gulf, my senses sink;**
See there, Glumdalca, see another [123] **me!**
Glum. **O, sight of horror! see, you are devoured**
By the expanded jaws of a red cow.
Merl. **Let not these sights deter thy noble mind,**

[120] Were heaven and earth in wild confusion hurled,
Should the rash gods unhinge the rolling world,
Undaunted would I tread the tottering ball,
Crushed, but unconquered, in the dreadful fall. *Female Warrior.*

[121] See the *History of Tom Thumb,* page 2.

[122] Amazement swallows up my sense,
And in the impetuous whirl of circling fate
Drinks down my reason. *Persian Princess.*

[123] I have outfaced myself.
What! am I two? Is there another me?
King Arthur.

[124] **For, lo! a sight more glorious courts thy eyes.**
See from afar a theatre arise;
There ages, yet unborn, shall tribute pay
To the heroic actions of this day;
Then buskin tragedy at length shall choose
Thy name the best supporter of her muse.
Thumb. **Enough: let every warlike music sound.**
We fall contented, if we fall renown'd.

Scene IX

Lord Grizzle, Foodle, *Rebels, on one side;* Tom Thumb, Glumdalca, *on the other.*

Food. **At length the enemy advances nigh,**
[125] **I hear them with my ear, and see them with my eye.**
Griz. **Draw all your swords: for liberty we fight,**
[126] **And liberty the mustard is of life.**
Thumb. **Are you the man whom men famed Grizzle name?**
Griz. [127] **Are you the much more famed Tom Thumb?**
Thumb. **The same.**
Griz. **Come on; our worth upon ourselves we'll prove;**
For liberty I fight.
Thumb. **And I for love.**
[*A bloody engagement between the two armies here; drums beating, trumpets sounding, thunder and lightning. They fight off and on several times. Some fall.* Grizzle *and* Glumdalca *remain.*

[124] The character of Merlin is wonderful throughout; but most so in this prophetic part. We find several of these prophecies in the tragic authors, who frequently take this opportunity to pay a compliment to their country, and sometimes to their prince. None but our author (who seems to have detested the least appearance of flattery) would have passed by such an opportunity of being a political prophet.

[125] I saw the villain, Myron; with these eyes
I saw him. *Busiris.*

In both which places it is intimated that it is sometimes possible to see with other eyes than your own.

[126] "This mustard," says Mr. D., "is enough to turn one's stomach. I would be glad to know what idea the author had in his head when he wrote it." This will be, I believe, best explained by a line of Mr. Dennis:

And gave him liberty, the salt of life.
Liberty Asserted.

The understanding that can digest the one will not rise at the other.

[127] *Han.* Are you the chief whom men famed Scipio call?
Scip. Are you the much more famous Hannibal? *Hannibal.*

Glum. **Turn, coward, turn; nor from a woman fly.**
Griz. **Away—thou art too ignoble for my arm.**
Glum. **Have at thy heart.**
Griz. **Nay, then I thrust at thine.**
Glum. **You push too well; you've run me through the guts,**
And I am dead.
Griz. **Then there's an end of one.**
Thumb. **When thou art dead, then there's an end of two,**
[128] **Villain.**
Griz. **Tom Thumb!**
Thumb. **Rebel!**
Griz. **Tom Thumb!**
Thumb. **Hell!**
Griz. **Huncamunca!**
Thumb. **Thou hast it there.**
Griz. **Too sure I feel it.**
Thumb. **To hell then, like a rebel as you are,**
And give my service to the rebels there.
Griz. **Triumph not, Thumb, nor think thou shalt enjoy**
Thy Huncamunca undisturbed; I'll send
[129] **My ghost to fetch her to the other world;**
[130] **It shall but bait at heaven, and then return.**
[131] **But, ha! I feel death rumbling in my brains:**
[132] **Some kinder sprite knocks softly at my soul,**

[128] Dr. Young seems to have copied this engagement in his *Buriris:*
Myr. Villain!
Mem. Myron!
Myr. Rebel!
Mem. Myron!
Myr. Hell!
Mem. Mandane!

[129] This last speech of my Lord Grizzle hath been of great service to our poets:
I'll hold it fast
As life, and when life's gone I'll hold this last;
And if thou takest it from me when I'm slain,
I'll send my ghost, and fetch it back again.
Conquest of Granada.

[130] My soul should with such speed obey,
It should not bait at heaven to stop its way.
Lee seems to have had this last in his eye:
'Twas not my purpose, sir, to tarry there;
I would but go to heaven to take the air.
Gloriana.

[131] A rising vapor rumbling in my brains.
Cleomenes.

[132] Some kind sprite knocks softly at my soul,
To tell me fate's at hand.

And gently whispers it to haste away.
I come, I come, most willingly I come.
[133] **So when some city wife, for country air,**
To Hampstead or to Highgate does implore,
Her to make haste her husband does implore,
And cries, "My dear, the coach is at the door:"
With equal wish, desirous to be gone,
She gets into the coach, and then she cries—
"Drive on!"
Thumb. **With those last words** [134] **he vomited his soul,**
Which, [135] **like whipt cream, the devil will swallow down.**
Bear off the body, and cut off the head,
Which I will to the king in triumph lug.
Rebellion's dead, and now I'll go to breakfast.

Scene X

King, Queen, Huncamunca, *Courtiers.*

King. **Open the prisons, set the wretched free,**
And bid our treasurer disburse six pounds
To pay their debts.—Let no one weep to-day.
Come, Dollallolla; [136] **curse that odious name!**
It is so long, it asks an hour to speak it.
By heavens! I'll change it into Doll, or Loll,
Or any other civil monosyllable,
That will not tire my tongue.—Come, sit thee down.
Here seated let us view the dancers' sports;
Bid 'em advance. This is the wedding-day
Of Princess Huncamunca and Tom Thumb;
Tom Thumb! who wins two victories [137] **to-day,**
And this way marches, bearing Grizzle's head.
A dance here.

[133] Mr. Dryden seems to have had this simile in his eye, when he says,
My soul is packing up, and just on wing.
Conquest of Granada.

[134] And in a purple vomit poured his soul.
Cleomenes.

[135] The devil swallows vulgar souls
Like whipt cream. *Sebastian.*

[136] How I could curse my name of Ptolemy!
It is so long, it asks an hour to write it.
By heaven! I'll change it into Jove or Mars!
Or any other civil monosyllable,
That will not tire my hand. *Cleomenes.*

[137] Here is a visible conjunction of two days in one, by which our author may have either intended an emblem of a wedding, or to insinuate that men in the honey-moon are apt to imagine time shorter than it is. It brings into my mind a passage in the comedy called *The Coffee-House Politician:*
We will celebrate this day at my house to-morrow.

Nood. **Oh! monstrous, dreadful, terrible, Oh! Oh!**
Deaf be my ears, for ever blind my eyes!
Dumb be my tongue! feet lame! all senses lost!
[138] **Howl wolves, grunt bears, hiss snakes, shriek all ye ghosts!**
King. **What does the blockhead mean?**
Nood. **I mean, my liege,**
[139] **Only to grace my tale with decent horror.**
Whilst from my garret, twice two stories high,
I looked abroad into the streets below,
I saw Tom Thumb attended by the mob;
Twice twenty shoe-boys, twice two dozen links,
Chairmen and porters, hackney-coachmen, whores;
Aloft he bore the grizzly head of Grizzle;
When of a sudden through the streets there came
A cow, of larger than the usual size,
And in a moment—guess, Oh! guess the rest!—
And in a moment swallowed up Tom Thumb.
King. **Shut up again the prisons, bid my treasurer**
Not give three farthings out—hang all the culprits,
Guilty or not—no matter.—Ravish virgins:
Go bid the schoolmasters whip all their boys!
Let lawyers, parsons, and physicians loose,
To rob, impose on, and to kill the world.
Nood. **Her majesty the queen is in a swoon.**
Queen. **Not so much in a swoon but I have still**
Strength to reward the messenger of ill news. [*Kills* NOODLE.
Nood. **O! I am slain.**
Cle. **My lover's killed, I will revenge him so.** [*Kills the* QUEEN.
Hunc. **My mamma killed! vile murderess, beware.** [*Kills* CLEORA.
Dood. **This for an old grudge to thy heart.** [*Kills* HUNCAMUNCA.
Must. **And this**
I drive to thine, O Doodle! for a new one. [*Kills* DOODLE.

[138] These beautiful phrases are all to be found in one single speech of *King Arthur, or The British Worthy.*

[139] I was but teaching him to grace his tale
With decent horror. *Cleomenes.*

King. **Ha! murderess vile, take that.** [*Kills* MUST.
[140] **And take thou this.** [*Kills himself, and falls.*
So when the child, whom nurse from danger guards,
Sends Jack for mustard with a pack of cards,
Kings, queens, and knaves, throw one another down,
Till the whole pack lies scattered and o'erthrown;
So all our pack upon the floor is cast,
And all I boast is—that I fall the last. [*Dies.*

[140] We may say with Dryden,

Death did at length so many slain forget,
And left the tale, and took them by the great.

I know of no tragedy which comes nearer to this charming and bloody catastrophe than *Cleomenes,* where the curtain covers five principal characters dead on the stage. These lines too—

I asked no questions then, of who killed who?
The bodies tell the story as they lie—

seem to have belonged more properly to this scene of our author; nor can I help imagining they were originally his. *The Rival Ladies,* too, seem beholden to this scene:

We're now a chain of lovers linked in death;
Julia goes first, Gonsalvo hangs on her,
And Angelina hangs upon Gonsalvo,
As I on Angelina.

No scene, I believe, ever received greater honors than this. It was applauded by several encores, a word very unusual in tragedy. And it was very difficult for the actors to escape without a second slaughter. This I take to be a lively assurance of that fierce spirit of liberty which remains among us, and which Mr. Dryden, in his *Essay on Dramatic Poetry,* hath observed: "Whether custom," says he, "hath so insinuated itself into our countrymen, or nature hath so formed them to fierceness, I know not; but they will scarcely suffer combats and other objects of horror to be taken from them." And indeed I am for having them encouraged in this martial disposition: nor do I believe our victories over the French have been owing to anything more than to those bloody spectacles daily exhibited in our tragedies, of which the French stage is so entirely clear.

GEORGE LILLO

THE LONDON MERCHANT

The few facts we possess of the life of George Lillo are for the most part centred about his plays. It seems that he was the son of a Dutch jeweler and his English wife and that he was born in the neighborhood of Moorfields, London, on February 4, 1693. He probably followed his father's trade and was for some time his partner. He did not blossom out as a playwright till his ballad opera of *Silvia, or the Country Burial* was acted at Drury Lane in November, 1730. That it was given only three times would indicate that it was not a great success. But the next year a wonderful thing happened. On June 22, 1731, he produced at Drury Lane his tragedy of *The Merchant,* soon afterwards renamed *The London Merchant or the History of George Barnwell,* and he was at once a famous man. The young bloods that came with copies of the ballad on which the story of the play was based, intending to show how superior the poem was to the play, threw down their ballads and pulled out their handkerchiefs, for

> The pathos of the drama was so deep
> That those who went to scoff remained to weep.

And the play ran for over twenty nights to full houses in a hot and dull summer! It was frequently revived and was always given in the Christmas and Easter holidays for the edifications of the apprentices even late enough to excite the disgust of Charles Lamb. It held the stage for over a century, and its parts were taken by such famous actors and actresses as Theophilus Cibber and his wife, Charles Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, and Miss Pope. In the fifth edition Lillo inserted before the last scene the one at the place of execution.

Early in 1734 Lillo composed a masque, *Britannia and Batavia,* which was performed at Covent Garden in February and for more than thirty times afterwards. *The Christian Hero,* first acted at Drury Lane on January 13, 1735, was not a success, it being too "useful and solemn a representation for the general taste of an English audience." The next year he produced his *Fatal Curiosity* at the Haymarket, which at first did not succeed but the next season attained some popularity through its being tacked on to Fielding's *Historical Register for 1736.* It was frequently revived, though not to the extent of *The London Merchant;* in 1797 John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons

acted the leading parts. Later and poorer works were *Marina,* an adaptation of Shakspere's *Pericles* (1738), the tragedy of *Elmerick or Justice Triumphant,* which was not produced till after Lillo's death. He left an unfinished version of the Elizabethan domestic tragedy, *Arden of Feversham,* which Dr. John Hoadly revised or completed. It was not acted till July, 1759. Lillo died on September 3, 1739.

Lillo's *The London Merchant* is generally regarded as the culminating point of domestic tragedy. The type was by no means new; it and sentimental comedy made up the drama of sensibility, which goes back in its origins to the Elizabethans. Typical examples of the domestic tragedy in its earlier stages are *Arden of Feversham,* Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness,* and *The Yorkshire Tragedy;* in the Restoration period are Otway's *Orphan,* Southerne's *The Fatal Marriage,* and the plays of Banks (even though his characters are royal and his scenes historical); and in the eighteenth century are Rowe's three "she-tragedies," which form a link with Lillo's two important plays.

The drama of sensibility, according to Professor Bernbaum's penetrating study,[1] was "a protest against the orthodox view of life, and against those literary conventions which had served that view. It implied that human nature . . . was perfectible by an appeal to the emotions. . . . It wished to show that beings who were good at heart were found in the ordinary walks of life. It so represented their conduct as to arouse admiration for their virtues and pity for their sufferings. . . . In domestic tragedy, it showed them overwhelmed by catastrophes for which they were normally not responsible." And the sentimentalist's "notion of pity is sympathy for a person who could not help his error; the orthodox idea of pity is compassion towards one who knows and owns his guilt."[2]

This sentimentality appears in Lillo's first work, his ballad opera, *Silvia, or the Country Burial.* Here are all the familiar motives and characters: the aristocratic villain who tries to seduce the lowborn maiden, the virtuous maiden, whose resistance to evil and devotion to her humble father convert the would-be seducer into an honorable suitor for her hand, the reward of virtue in the discovery that the aristocrat is the one who is lowborn and the maiden the daughter of a gentleman, for as infants they had been exchanged. And so all ends happily.

It was not, however, in sentimental comedy but in domestic tragedy that Lillo was to attain his greatest height. *The London Merchant,* as the Prologue says, was a tale of private woe,

> Which for a century of rolling years
> Has filled a thousand-thousand eyes with tears.

[1] *The Drama of Sensibility,* by Ernest Bernbaum, 1915, p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 36.

It drives home the moral lesson in the general theme and in innumerable speeches throughout the play; it shows guilt punished and the misled bitterly repentant; it suffuses pity for the helpless victim of a siren's wiles; and as to the siren, "no tongue can tell her anguish and despair."

The tragedy is based on "The Ballad of George Barnwell," but with very significant changes. The dramatist is concerned to lay all his emphasis on the sentimental character of the hero. The merchant, who is nameless in the ballad, is characterized rather fully as Thorowgood in the play and all that he says and does indicates his affection and sympathy for his clerk, George Barnwell. Trueman, his fellow-clerk, does not appear in the ballad but is created for the play in order that he may do everything possible to save George on his downward career. Maria is another creation of the dramatist to serve as sweet and innocent foil to the wicked Millwood and to produce a sentimental love interest. The Barnwell of the ballad is not exactly a hero. Once fallen he goes on recklessly in his career of crime. It is he who suggests the murder of his uncle; there is an ominous reference to a sister that might be robbed, and he would take in his father on his murderous way if he did not think it imprudent under the circumstances. He enjoys his uncle's hospitality for a fortnight before he "beat his brains out of his head," and he does rob the dead man of "fourscore pound." When the harlot turns him out, he escapes by sea, and because

> fear and sting of conscience
> Continually on him lay,

he wrote a letter to the lord mayor,

> In which his own and Sarah's fault
> He did at large recite.

No chivalrous defence of the lady for him! And so she is hanged, but he escaped for this offence, though later

> For murder in Polonia
> Was Barnwell hanged in chains.

The contrast between this Barnwell and that of the play is very striking. The first step is about the same in each case. An innocent and unsophisticated young man meets an alluring harlot and succumbs to her wiles. In the play he feels the moral reaction and resolves he will have nothing more to do with her; not so in the ballad. Then in the play she must appeal to the noble instincts of the young man, his sympathy for a woman in distress, which is largely due to the favors he has received from her. So he steals money that she may be saved from poverty and banishment. This embezzlement he confesses to his friend Trueman and leaves the merchant's establishment forever. And here we have a beautifully sentimental scene in which the good friend and the devoted sweetheart try to save the erring young man by the heroine's offer to make good the defalcation, though not to her father's

knowledge. But this is left hanging in mid-air since there is no further reference to it, and, anyway, her father learns the whole sad story from the suddenly repentant Lucy. Lucy is another creation of Lillo's to show by contrast how terribly wicked Sarah Millwood is. The murder, too, is conducted in a very gentlemanly manner. Barnwell in his agitation drops his pistol after several attempts to use it against his uncle; the noise alarms his uncle, who draws his sword, and George kills him to escape detection. It is pretty nearly a case of killing, not murder. Then instead of calmly walking off with forty pounds, the conscience-smitten youth falls on his uncle's dying body and implores forgiveness. And even when the ungrateful harlot turns him over to the police, he will not tell on her. He goes to his doom for this crime with a prayer for his betrayer and a moral lesson for all those who are tempted to sin.

As Bernbaum has pointed out, Lillo has added a new figure to domestic tragedy in the person of the she-villain Millwood, who corresponds to the male villains of the earlier plays of this kind. She is physically attractive and so seductive that the innocent victim is helpless in her hands. She has absolutely no redeeming qualities and she goes to her death brazenly unrepentant and contemptuous of the whole male sex. As such she is in striking contrast to the sentimental heroine Maria and all her predecessors.

Another respect in which this play departs from its predecessors is in its use of prose instead of blank verse. At times the prose is a sort of bastard blank verse, especially in the more moving passages. It was an attempt at natural utterance in keeping with the realistic theme; prose rather than the blank verse of royal tragedies was the fitting medium for merchants and clerks and harlots. The utterance of the characters is that of the fourth decade of the eighteenth century, not of the later years of the sixteenth, just before the Spanish Armada. Nor is there any effort in any other way to get the local color of a past age.

Notwithstanding the success that attended the performance of *The London Merchant,* Lillo through Fielding, who wrote the Prologue to *Fatal Curiosity: A True Tragedy of Three Acts,* still seemed to feel it necessary to express an apology for his play. Though

> The tragic Muse has long forgot to please
> With Shakespear's nature, or with Fletcher's ease,

the old type of play, however degenerate, was still fashionable. But Lillo would have none of it:

> No fustian hero rages here to-night;
> No armies fall to fix a tyrant's right:
> From lower life we draw our scene's distress—
> Let not your equals move your pity less!
> Virtue distrest in humble state support;
> Nor think she never lives without the court.

The ultimate source of the story is a black-letter pamphlet of 1618 entitled *News from Perin in Cornwall;* this was incorporated in W. Sanderson's *Compleat History of the Lives and Reigns of Mary, Queen of Scotland, and of her Son and Successor James* (1656), and later in Thomas Frankland's *Annals of the Reigns of King James and King Charles the First* (1681). The most striking difference between the pamphlet and the histories is that in the former the murder is committed by the step-mother, but in the latter by the mother, and in this respect the dramatist follows the later version. The date of the story is after Sir Walter Raleigh's return from Guiana in 1618, just thirty years after the events recorded in *The London Merchant.* As Ward points out, Lillo took advantage of the strong feeling against Spain when he wrote the play to recall past iniquities. Three years later Walpole actually declared war against Spain.

The story is more harrowing than that of *The London Merchant.* Old Wilmot and his wife Agnes are on the verge of starvation. Their only son, who had gone to India years ago and whom they believe to be dead, suddenly returns and reveals himself to his patient and devoted sweetheart, Charlotte. Then to

> Indulge [his] curiosity and try
> If it be possible by seeing first
> [His] parents as a stranger, to improve
> This pleasure by surprise,

he goes to his parents' house. When he gives his mother a casket of jewels to keep for him (one thinks of the comic turn given to a similar incident in *She Stoops to Conquer*), she realizes how this wealth would free them from their present distress; so she suggests to her husband that he murder the youth and take his wealth. No sooner is this done than discovery follows. Old Wilmot kills his wife and then himself.

The changes from the original are in keeping with those made in *The London Merchant.* Young Wilmot is not the erring son or the piratical adventurer of the pamphlet version, but a fine young man of the sentimental model. In the play he has a devoted sweetheart who continues to love him all through his absence, though for all she knew he might be dead; in the source there is a sister who is used purely for identification, not for sentimental purposes. The dramatist made a wise choice in preferring the history to the pamphlet version, when he made the instigator to murder the mother and not the step-mother. The fact too that the youth was destroyed through no fault of his own and by his mother made the workings of fate all the more tragic.

Because *Fatal Curiosity* presented this idea of fate as working independently of character, it later exerted a strong influence on German drama, and it came to be regarded as the first great exemplar of the fate drama. But as Bernbaum [3] has pointed out, "destiny had tyrannized over character in all the preceding domestic tragedies of the century" . . . though "the author

[3] *Loc. cit.*, p. 173.

of *Fatal Curiosity,* with a directness and lucidity characteristic of his manner of unfolding an action, exhibited the power of fate more vividly than it had been shown in any previous work of this genre."

In ironic contrast to this fate is the "curiosity," the "yearning for deeply emotional experiences,"[4] which here had such a fatal issue. This yearning is emphasized in this play more than in any preceding sentimental drama, for it is made the starting-point of a shocking murder. It is "the cultivation of the emotion for the sake of the thrill"[5] and therefore is not an adequate motive for a great tragedy. But it set an influence going which reached its culmination in the works of Laurence Sterne.

It is worth noting that this play is written in blank verse, but it is a hard choice between the verse of *Fatal Curiosity* and the prose of *The London Merchant.* In many cases the former scans as badly as the latter scans well.

Lillo was greater in his influence than in his actual dramatic accomplishment. His plays are not distinguished in themselves but they increased the vogue of the sentimental in the literature of the century. His influence extended into Germany and was particularly manifest in the *schicksalstragödie,* which was cultivated there more than in England. For the drama of sensibility he brought the sentimental hero to the highest point of perfection, he created the beautiful and unscrupulously wicked woman to destroy the hero, and he raised luxuriating in emotion to a *hybris* which becomes a tragic motive.

THE LONDON MERCHANT;

OR,

THE HISTORY OF GEORGE BARNWELL

By George Lillo

Learn to be wise from others' harm,
And you shall do full well.
Old Ballad of *The Lady's Fall.*

To Sir John Eyles, Bar., Member of Parliament for, and Alderman of the City of London, and Sub-Governor of the South Sea Company

Sir,

If tragic poetry be, as Mr. Dryden has somewhere said, the most excellent and most useful kind of writing, the more extensively useful the moral of any tragedy is, the more excellent that piece must be of its kind.

[4] Bernbaum, p. 174. [5] W. A. Neilson: *Essentials of Poetry,* p. 208.

I hope I shall not be thought to insinuate that this, to which I have presumed to prefix your name, is such; that depends on its fitness to answer the end of tragedy, the exciting of the passions in order to the correcting such of them as are criminal, either in their nature, or through their excess. Whether the following scenes do this in any tolerable degree, is, with the deference that becomes one who would not be thought vain, submitted to your candid and impartial judgment.

What I would infer is this, I think, evident truth; that tragedy is so far from losing its dignity by being accommodated to the circumstances of the generality of mankind that it is more truly august in proportion to the extent of its influence and the numbers that are properly affected by it. As it is more truly great to be the instrument of good to many who stand in need of our assistance, than to a very small part of that number.

If princes, etc., were alone liable to misfortunes arising from vice or weakness in themselves or others, there would be good reason for confining the characters in tragedy to those of superior rank; but, since the contrary is evident, nothing can be more reasonable than to proportion the remedy to the disease.

I am far from denying that tragedies, founded on any instructive and extraordinary events in history, or a well-invented fable, where the persons introduced are of the highest rank, are without their use, even to the bulk of the audience. The strong contrast between a Tamerlane and a Bajazet, may have its weight with an unsteady people, and contribute to the fixing of them in the interest of a prince of the character of the former, when, through their own levity or the arts of designing men, they are rendered factious and uneasy, though they have the highest reason to be satisfied. The sentiments and example of a Cato may inspire his spectators with a just sense of the value of liberty, when they see that honest patriot prefer death to an obligation from a tyrant who would sacrifice the constitution of his country and the liberties of mankind, to his ambition or revenge. I have attempted, indeed, to enlarge the province of the graver kind of poetry, and should be glad to see it carried on by some abler hand. Plays founded on moral tales in private life may be of admirable use, by carrying conviction to the mind with such irresistible force as to engage all the faculties and powers of the soul in the cause of virtue, by stifling vice in its first principles. They who imagine this to be too much to be attributed to tragedy, must be strangers to the energy of that noble species of poetry. Shakspere, who has given such amazing proofs of his genius, in that as well as in comedy, in his *Hamlet* has the following lines:

> Had he the motive and the cause for passion
> That I have, he would drown the stage with tears
> And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
> Make mad the guilty, and appall the free;

Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculty of eyes and ears.

And farther, in the same speech:

I've heard that guilty creatures at a play
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
Been so struck to the soul, that presently
They had proclaimed their malefactions.

Prodigious! yet strictly just. But I shan't take up your valuable time with my remarks; only give me leave just to observe, that he seems so firmly persuaded of the power of a well wrote piece to produce the effect here ascribed to it, as to make Hamlet venture his soul on the event, and rather trust that than a messenger from the other world, though it assumed, as he expresses it, his noble father's form, and assured him that it was his spirit. "I'll have," says Hamlet, "grounds more relative";

. . . The Play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

Such plays are the best answers to them who deny the lawfulness of the stage.

Considering the novelty of this attempt, I thought it would be expected from me to say something in its excuse; and I was unwilling to lose the opportunity of saying something of the usefulness of tragedy in general, and what may be reasonably expected from the farther improvement of this excellent kind of poetry.

Sir, I hope you will not think I have said too much of an art, a mean specimen of which I am ambitious enough to recommend to your favor and protection. A mind conscious of superior worth, as much despises flattery as it is above it. Had I found in myself an inclination to so contemptible a vice, I should not have chose Sir John Eyles for my patron. And indeed the best writ panegyric, though strictly true, must place you in a light much inferior to that in which you have long been fixed by the love and esteem of your fellow citizens, whose choice of you for one of their representatives in Parliament has sufficiently declared their sense of your merit. Nor hath the knowledge of your worth been confined to the City. The proprietors in the South-Sea Company, in which are included numbers of persons as considerable for their rank, fortune, and understanding as any in the kingdom, gave the greatest proof of their confidence in your capacity and probity when they chose you Sub-Governor of their Company at a time when their affairs were in the utmost confusion and their properties in the greatest danger. Nor is the Court insensible of your importance. I shall not therefore attempt your character, nor pretend to add anything to a reputation so well established.

Whatever others may think of a dedication wherein there is so much said

of other things, and so little of the person to whom it is addressed, I have reason to believe that you will the more easily pardon it on that very account.

I am, sir,

Your most obedient
humble servant,
George Lillo

PROLOGUE

SPOKE BY MR. CIBBER, JUN.

The Tragic Muse, sublime, delights to show
Princes distressed and scenes of royal woe;
In awful pomp, majestic, to relate
The fall of nations or some hero's fate:
That sceptered chiefs may by example know
The strange vicissitude of things below;
What dangers on security attend;
How pride and cruelty in ruin end;
Hence Providence supreme to know, and own
Humanity adds glory to a throne.
In ev'ry former age and foreign tongue
With native grandeur thus the Goddess sung.
Upon our stage, indeed, with wished success,
You've sometimes seen her in a humbler dress—
Great only in distress. When she complains
In Southern's, Rowe's, or Otway's moving strains,
The brilliant drops that fall from each bright eye
The absent pomp with brighter gems supply.
Forgive us then, if we attempt to show,
In artless strains, a tale of private woe.
A London 'prentice ruined is our theme,
Drawn from the famed old song that bears his name.
We hope your taste is not so high to scorn
A moral tale, esteemed ere you were born;
Which, for a century of rolling years,
Has filled a thousand-thousand eyes with tears.
If thoughtless youth to warn, and shame the age
From vice destructive, well becomes the stage;
If this example innocence secure,
Prevent our guilt, or by reflection cure;
If Millwood's dreadful guilt and sad despair
Commend the virtue of the good and fair:
Though art be wanting, and our numbers fail,
Indulge th'attempt, in justice to the tale!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

Thorowgood.
Barnwell, *uncle to* George.
George Barnwell.
Trueman.
Blunt.
[Jailer].
[John].

WOMEN

Maria.
Millwood.
Lucy.

Officers with their Attendants, Keeper, and Footmen.

Scene—London and an Adjacent Village.

ACT I

Scene I

A Room in Thorowgood's *House.*

Enter Thorowgood *and* Trueman.

True. Sir, the packet from Genoa is arrived. [*Gives letters.*

Thor. Heav'n be praised, the storm that threatened our royal mistress, pure religion, liberty and laws, is for a time diverted; the haughty and revengeful Spaniard, disappointed of the loan on which he depended from Genoa, must now attend the slow return of wealth from his new world, to supply his empty coffers ere he can execute his purposed invasion of our happy island; by which means time is gained to make such preparations on our part as may, Heav'n concurring, prevent his malice, or turn the meditated mischief on himself.

True. He must be insensible, indeed, who is not affected when the safety of his country is concerned.—Sir, may I know by what means—if I am too bold——

Thor. Your curiosity is laudable; and I gratify it with the greater pleasure, because from thence you may learn how honest merchants, as such, may sometimes contribute to the safety of their country, as they do at all times to its happiness; that if hereafter you should be tempted to any action that has the appearance of vice or meanness in it, upon reflecting on the dignity of our profession, you may with honest scorn reject whatever is unworthy of it.

True. Should Barnwell, or I, who have the benefit of your example, by our ill conduct bring any imputation on that honorable name, we must be left without excuse.

Thor. You compliment, young man. [Trueman *bows respectfully*] Nay, I'm not offended. As the name of merchant never degrades the gentleman, so by no means does it exclude him; only take heed not to purchase the character of complaisant at the expense of your sincerity.—But to answer your question. The bank of Genoa had agreed, at excessive interest and on good security, to advance the King of Spain a sum of money sufficient to equip his vast Armada; of which our peerless Elizabeth (more than in name the Mother of her People) being well informed, sent Walsingham, her wise and faithful secretary, to consult the merchants of this loyal city, who all agreed to direct their several agents to influence, if possible, the Genoese to break their contract with the Spanish court. 'Tis done; the state and bank of Genoa, having maturely weighed and rightly judged of their true interest, prefer the friendship of the merchants of London to that of a monarch who proudly styles himself King of both Indies.

True. Happy success of prudent councils! What an expense of blood and treasure is here saved! Excellent Queen! Oh, how unlike to former princes, who made the danger of foreign enemies a pretence to oppress their subjects by taxes great and grievous to be borne.

Thor. Not so our gracious Queen, whose richest exchequer is her people's love, as their happiness her greatest glory.

True. On these terms to defend us, is to make our protection a benefit worthy her who confers it, and well worth our acceptance.—Sir, have you any commands for me at this time?

Thor. Only to look carefully over the files to see whether there are any tradesmen's bills unpaid; and if there are, to send and discharge 'em. We must not let artificers lose their time, so useful to the public and their families, in unnecessary attendance.

[*Exit* Trueman.

Scene II

Thorowgood *and* Maria.

Thor. Well, Maria, have you given orders for the entertainment? I would have it in

some measure worthy the guests. Let there be plenty, and of the best; that the courtiers, though they should deny us citizens politeness, may at least commend our hospitality.

Mar. Sir, I have endeavored not to wrong your well-known generosity by an ill-timed parsimony.

Thor. Nay, 'twas a needless caution; I have no cause to doubt your prudence.

Mar. Sir, I find myself unfit for conversation at present. I should but increase the number of the company without adding to their satisfaction.

Thor. Nay, my child, this melancholy must not be indulged.

Mar. Company will but increase it. I wish you would dispense with my absence; solitude best suits my present temper.

Thor. You are not insensible that it is chiefly on your account these noble lords do me the honor so frequently to grace my board; should you be absent, the disappointment may make them repent their condescension and think their labor lost.

Mar. He that shall think his time or honor lost in visiting you can set no real value on your daughter's company, whose only merit is that she is yours. The man of quality who chooses to converse with a gentleman and merchant of your worth and character, may confer honor by so doing, but he loses none.

Thor. Come, come, Maria; I need not tell you that a young gentleman may prefer your conversation to mine, yet intend me no disrespect at all; for, though he may lose no honor in my company, 'tis very natural for him to expect more pleasure in yours. I remember the time when the company of the greatest and wisest man in the kingdom would have been insipid and tiresome to me if it had deprived me of an opportunity of enjoying your mother's.

Mar. Yours no doubt was as agreeable to her; for generous minds know no pleasure in society but where 'tis mutual.

Thor. Thou know'st I have no heir, no child but thee; the fruits of many years' successful industry must all be thine. Now, it would give me pleasure great as my love, to see on whom you would bestow it. I am daily solicited by men of the greatest rank and merit for leave to address you, but I have hitherto declined it, in hopes that by observation I should learn which way your inclination tends; for, as I know love to be essential to happiness in the marriage state, I had rather my approbation should confirm your choice than direct it.

Mar. What can I say? How shall I answer, as I ought, this tenderness, so uncommon even in the best of parents? But you are without example; yet had you been less indulgent, I had been most wretched. That I look on the crowd of courtiers that visit here with equal esteem but equal indifference, you have observed, and I must needs confess; yet had you asserted your authority, and insisted on a parent's right to be obeyed, I had submitted and to my duty sacrificed my peace.

Thor. From your perfect obedience in every other instance I feared as much, and therefore would leave you without a bias in an affair wherein your happiness is so immediately concerned.

Mar. Whether from a want of that just ambition that would become your daughter, or from some other cause, I know not, but I find high birth and titles don't recommend the man who owns them to my affections.

Thor. I would not that they should, unless his merit recommends him more. A noble birth and fortune, though they make not a bad man good, yet they are a real advantage to a worthy one, and place his virtues in the fairest light.

Mar. I cannot answer for my inclinations, but they shall ever be submitted to your wisdom and authority; and, as you will not compel me to marry where I cannot love, so love shall never make me act contrary to my duty. Sir, have I your permission to retire?

Thor. I'll see you to your chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III

A Room in Millwood's *House.*

Millwood [*at her toilet*]. Lucy, *waiting.*

Mill. How do I look to-day, Lucy?

Lucy. Oh, killingly, madam! A little more red, and you'll be irresistible! But why this more than ordinary care of your dress and complexion? What new conquest are you aiming at?

Mill. A conquest would be new indeed!

Lucy. Not to you, who make 'em every day, but to me.—Well! 'tis what I'm never to expect, unfortunate as I am. But your wit and beauty——

Mill. First made me a wretch, and still continue me so. Men, however generous or sincere to one another, are all selfish hypocrites in their affairs with us. We are no otherwise esteemed or regarded by them but as we contribute to their satisfaction.

Lucy. You are certainly, madam, on the wrong side in this argument. Is not the expense all theirs? And I am sure it is our own fault, if we haven't our share of the pleasure.

Mill. We are but slaves to men.

Lucy. Nay, 'tis they that are slaves most

certainly; for we lay them under contribution.

Mill. Slaves have no property; no, not even in themselves. All is the victor's.

Lucy. You are strangely arbitrary in your principles, madam.

Mill. I would have my conquests complete, like those of the Spaniards in the New World: who first plundered the natives of all the wealth they had, and then condemned the wretches to the mines for life to work for more.

Lucy. Well, I shall never approve of your scheme of government; I should think it much more politic, as well as just, to find my subjects an easier employment.

Mill. It's a general maxim among the knowing part of mankind, that a woman without virtue, like a man without honor or honesty, is capable of any action, though never so vile; and yet, what pains will they not take, what arts not use, to seduce us from our innocence, and make us contemptible and wicked, even in their own opinions! Then is it not just, the villains, to their cost, should find us so?—But guilt makes them suspicious, and keeps them on their guard; therefore we can take advantage only of the young and innocent part of the sex, who, having never injured women, apprehend no injury from them.

Lucy. Aye, they must be young indeed.

Mill. Such a one, I think, I have found.—As I've passed through the City, I have often observed him receiving and paying considerable sums of money; from thence I conclude he is employed in affairs of consequence.

Lucy. Is he handsome?

Mill. Aye, aye, the stripling is well made.

Lucy. About——

Mill. Eighteen.

Lucy. Innocent, handsome, and about eighteen.—You'll be vastly happy.—Why, if you manage well, you may keep him to yourself these two or three years.

Mill. If I manage well, I shall have done with him much sooner. Having long had a design on him and meeting him yesterday, I made a full stop, and, gazing wishfully on his face, asked him his name; he blushed, and bowing very low, answered: "George Barnwell." I begged his pardon for the freedom I had taken, and told him that he was the person I had long wished to see, and to whom I had an affair of importance to communicate at a proper time and place. He named a tavern; I talked of honor and reputation, and invited him to my house: he swallowed the bait, promised to come, and this is the time I expect him. [*Knocking at the door*] Somebody knocks—d'ye hear; I am at home to nobody to-day but him.

[*Exit* Lucy.

Scene IV

Millwood.

Mill. Less affairs must give way to those of more consequence, and I am strangely mistaken if this does not prove of great importance to me and him too, before I have done with him.—Now, after what manner shall I receive him? Let me consider—what manner of person am I to receive? He is young, innocent, and bashful; therefore I must take care not to shock him at first.—But then, if I have any skill in physiognomy, he is amorous, and, with a little assistance, will soon get the better of his modesty.—I'll trust to Nature, who does wonders in these matters.—If to seem what one is not, in order to be the better liked for what one really is; if to speak one thing, and mean the direct contrary, be art in a woman,—I know nothing of nature.

Scene V

Enter to her Barnwell, *bowing very low.* Lucy *at a distance.*

Mill. Sir! the surprise and joy——

Barn. Madam——

Mill. [*advancing*]. This is such a favor——

Barn. Pardon me, madam——

Mill. [*still advances*]. So unhoped for—[Barnwell *salutes her, and retires in confusion*]—to see you here.—Excuse the confusion——

Barn. I fear I am too bold.

Mill. Alas, sir! All my apprehensions proceed from my fears of your thinking me so.—Please, sir, to sit.—I am as much at a loss how to receive this honor as I ought, as I am surprised at your goodness in conferring it.

Barn. I thought you had expected me—I promised to come.

Mill. That is the more surprising; few men are such religious observers of their word.

Barn. All who are honest are.

Mill. To one another.—But we silly women are seldom thought of consequence enough to gain a place in your remembrance.

[*Laying her hand on his, as by accident.*

Barn. [*aside*]. Her disorder is so great, she don't perceive she has laid her hand on mine.—Heaven! how she trembles!—What can this mean?

Mill. The interest I have in all that relates to you (the reason of which you shall know hereafter), excites my curiosity; and, were I sure you would pardon my presumption, I should desire to know your real sentiments on a very particular affair.

Barn. Madam, you may command my poor

thoughts on any subject; I have none that I would conceal.

Mill. You'll think me bold.

Barn. No, indeed.

Mill. What then are your thoughts of love?

Barn. If you mean the love of women, I have not thought of it at all.—My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet. But if you mean the general love we owe to mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself.—I don't know that person in the world whose happiness I don't wish and wouldn't promote, were it in my power.—In an especial manner I love my uncle and my master, but, above all, my friend.

Mill. You have a friend then whom you love?

Barn. As he does me, sincerely.

Mill. He is, no doubt, often blessed with your company and conversation.

Barn. We live in one house together, and both serve the same worthy merchant.

Mill. Happy, happy youth! Whoe'er thou art, I envy thee, and so must all who see and know this youth.—What have I lost, by being formed a woman! I hate my sex, myself. Had I been a man, I might, perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it; but, as it is—oh!

Barn. [*aside*]. I never observed women before, or this is sure the most beautiful of her sex! You seem disordered, madam! May I know the cause?

Mill. Do not ask me,—I can never speak it, whatever is the cause.—I wish for things impossible.—I would be a servant, bound to the same master as you are, to live in one house with you.

Barn. [*aside*]. How strange, and yet how kind, her words and actions are! And the effect they have on me is as strange. I feel desires I never knew before. I must be gone, while I have power to go.—Madam, I humbly take my leave.

Mill. You will not sure leave me so soon!

Barn. Indeed, I must.

Mill. You cannot be so cruel!—I have prepared a poor supper, at which I promised myself your company.

Barn. I am sorry I must refuse the honor that you designed me, but my duty to my master calls me hence. I never yet neglected his service; he is so gentle, and so good a master, that, should I wrong him, though he might forgive me, I never should forgive myself.

Mill. Am I refused, by the first man, the second favor I ever stooped to ask?—Go then, thou proud, hard-hearted youth! But know, you are the only man that could be found who would let me sue twice for greater favors.

Barn. [*aside*]. What shall I do!—How shall I go or stay!

Mill. Yet do not, do not, leave me! I wish my sex's pride would meet your scorn:—but when I look upon you,—when I behold those eyes,—oh! spare my tongue, and let my blushes speak.—This flood of tears to that will force their way, and declare—what woman's modesty should hide.

Barn. [*aside*]. Oh, heavens! she loves me, worthless as I am; her looks, her words, her flowing tears confess it;—and can I leave her, then?—Oh, never, never!—Madam, dry up those tears! You shall command me always; I will stay here forever, if you'd have me.

Lucy [*aside*]. So! she has wheedled him out of his virtue of obedience already, and will strip him of all the rest, one after another, till she has left him as few as her ladyship or myself.

Mill. Now you are kind, indeed; but I mean not to detain you always. I would have you shake off all slavish obedience to your master, but you may serve him still.

Lucy [*aside*]. Serve him still!—Aye, or he'll have no opportunity of fingering his cash, and then he'll not serve your end, I'll be sworn.

Scene VI

To them Blunt.

Blunt. Madam, supper's on the table.

Mill. Come, sir, you'll excuse all defects.—My thoughts were too much employed on my guest to observe the entertainment.

[*Exeunt* Millwood *and* Barnwell.

Scene VII

Lucy *and* Blunt.

Blunt. What! is all this preparation, this elegant supper, variety of wines, and music, for the entertainment of that young fellow?

Lucy. So it seems.

Blunt. What! is our mistress turned fool at last? She's in love with him, I suppose.

Lucy. I suppose not; but she designs to make him in love with her, if she can.

Blunt. What will she get by that? He seems under age, and can't be supposed to have much money.

Lucy. But his master has, and that's the same thing, as she'll manage it.

Blunt. I don't like this fooling with a handsome young fellow; while she's endeavoring to ensnare him, she may be caught herself.

Lucy. Nay, were she like me, that would certainly be the consequence; for, I confess, there is something in youth and innocence that moves me mightily.

Blunt. Yes, so does the smoothness and plumpness of a partridge move a mighty desire in the hawk to be the destruction of it.

Lucy. Why, birds are their prey, as men are ours, though, as you observed, we are sometimes caught ourselves; but that, I dare say, will never be the case with our mistress.

Blunt. I wish it may prove so; for you know we all depend upon her. Should she trifle away her time with a young fellow that there's nothing to be got by, we must all starve.

Lucy. There's no danger of that, for I am sure she has no view in this affair but interest.

Blunt. Well, and what hopes are there of success in that?

Lucy. The most promising that can be. 'Tis true, the youth has his scruples; but she'll soon teach him to answer them by stifling his conscience. Oh, the lad is in a hopeful way, depend upon't. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VIII

Barnwell *and* Millwood *at an entertainment.*

Barn. What can I answer? All that I know is, that you are fair and I am miserable.

Mill. We are both so, and yet the fault is in ourselves.

Barn. To ease our present anguish by plunging into guilt, is to buy a moment's pleasure with an age of pain.

Mill. I should have thought the joys of love as lasting as they are great. If ours prove otherwise, 'tis your inconstancy must make them so.

Barn. The law of Heaven will not be reversed, and that requires us to govern our passions.

Mill. To give us sense of beauty and desires, and yet forbid us to taste and be happy, is cruelty to nature. Have we passions only to torment us?

Barn. To hear you talk, though in the cause of vice—to gaze upon your beauty—press your hand—and see your snow-white bosom heave and fall—inflames my wishes. My pulse beats high—my senses all are in a hurry, and I am on the rack of wild desire. Yet, for a moment's guilty pleasure, shall I lose my innocence, my peace of mind, and hopes of solid happiness?

Mill. Chimeras all!—Come on with me and prove
No joys like woman kind, nor heav'n like love.

Barn. [*aside*]. I would not, yet must on.—

Reluctant thus, the merchant quits his ease,
And trusts to rocks, and sands, and stormy seas;
In hopes some unknown golden coast to find,
Commits himself, though doubtful, to the wind;
Longs much for joys to come, yet mourns those left behind. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

A Room in Thorowgood's *House.*

Barnwell.

Barn. How strange are all things round me! Like some thief, who treads forbidden ground, fearful I enter each apartment of this well known house. To guilty love, as if that was too little, already have I added breach of trust.—A thief!—Can I know myself that wretched thing, and look my honest friend and injured master in the face? Though hypocrisy may a while conceal my guilt, at length it will be known, and public shame and ruin must ensue. In the meantime, what must be my life? Ever to speak a language foreign to my heart; hourly to add to the number of my crimes in order to conceal 'em.—Sure, such was the condition of the grand apostate, when first he lost his purity; like me, disconsolate he wandered, and, while yet in heaven, bore all his future hell about him.

Enter Trueman.

Scene II

Barnwell *and* Trueman.

True. Barnwell! Oh, how I rejoice to see you safe! So will our master and his gentle daughter, who during your absence often inquired after you.

Barn. [*aside*]. Would he were gone! His officious love will pry into the secrets of my soul.

True. Unless you knew the pain the whole family has felt on your account, you can't conceive how much you are beloved. But why thus cold and silent? When my heart is full of joy for your return, why do you turn away? why thus avoid me? What have I done? how am I altered since you saw me last? Or rather, what have you done? and why are you thus changed, for I am still the same.

Barn. [*aside*]. What have I done, indeed!

True. Not speak nor look upon me!

Barn. [*aside*]. By my face he will discover all I would conceal; methinks, already I begin to hate him.

True. I cannot bear this usage from a friend—one whom till now I ever found so loving—whom yet I love, though this unkindness strikes at the root of friendship,

and might destroy it in any breast but mine.

Barn. [*turning to him*]. I am not well. Sleep has been a stranger to these eyes since you beheld them last.

True. Heavy they look indeed, and swoln with tears;—now they o'erflow. Rightly did my sympathizing heart forbode last night, when thou wast absent, something fatal to our peace.

Barn. Your friendship engages you too far. My troubles, whate'er they are, are mine alone; you have no interest in them, nor ought your concern for me give you a moment's pain.

True. You speak as if you knew of friendship nothing but the name. Before I saw your grief I felt it. Since we parted last I have slept no more than you, but pensive in my chamber sat alone and spent the tedious night in wishes for your safety and return; e'en now, though ignorant of the cause, your sorrow wounds me to the heart.

Barn. 'Twill not be always thus. Friendship and all engagements cease, as circumstances and occasions vary; and, since you once may hate me, perhaps it might be better for us both that now you loved me less.

True. [*aside*]—Sure, I but dream! Without a cause would Barnwell use me thus?—Ungenerous and ungrateful youth, farewell! I shall endeavor to follow your advice. [*Going*] [*Aside*] Yet stay, perhaps I am too rash, and angry when the cause demands compassion. Some unforeseen calamity may have befaln him, too great to bear.

Barn. [*aside*]. What part am I reduced to act! 'Tis vile and base to move his temper thus—the best of friends and men!

True. I am to blame; prithee, forgive me, Barnwell! Try to compose your ruffled mind, and let me know the cause that thus transports you from yourself: my friendly counsel may restore your peace.

Barn. All that is possible for man to do for man, your generous friendship may effect; but here even that's in vain.

True. Something dreadful is laboring in your breast. Oh, give it vent, and let me share your grief; 'twill ease your pain, should it admit no cure, and make it lighter by the part I bear.

Barn. [*aside*]. Vain supposition! My woes increase by being observed; should the cause be known, they would exceed all bounds.

True. So well I know thy honest heart, guilt cannot harbor there.

Barn. [*aside*]. Oh, torture insupportable!

True. Then why am I excluded? Have I a thought I would conceal from you?

Barn. If still you urge me on this hated subject, I'll never enter more beneath this roof nor see your face again.

True. 'Tis strange—but I have done. Say but you hate me not!

Barn. Hate you! I am not that monster yet.

True. Shall our friendship still continue?

Barn. It's a blessing I never was worthy of; yet now must stand on terms, and but upon conditions can confirm it.

True. What are they?

Barn. Never hereafter, though you should wonder at my conduct, desire to know more than I am willing to reveal.

True. 'Tis hard; but upon any conditions, I must be your friend.

Barn. Then, as much as one lost to himself can be another's, I am yours.

[*Embracing.*

True. Be ever so, and may Heaven restore your peace!

Barn. Will yesterday return? We have heard the glorious sun, that till then incessant rolled, once stopped his rapid course, and once went back. The dead have risen, and parched rocks poured forth a liquid stream to quench a people's thirst; the sea divided, and formed walls of water, while a whole nation passed in safety through its sandy bosom; hungry lions have refused their prey, and men unhurt have walked amidst consuming flames. But never yet did time, once past, return.

True. Though the continued chain of time has never once been broke, nor ever will, but uninterrupted must keep on its course, till lost in eternity it ends there where it first begun; yet, as Heaven can repair whatever evils time can bring upon us, he who trusts Heaven ought never to despair. But business requires our attendance—business, the youth's best preservative from ill, as idleness his worst of snares. Will you go with me?

Barn. I'll take a little time to reflect on what has passed, and follow you.

[*Exit* Trueman.

Scene III

Barnwell.

Barn. I might have trusted Trueman to have applied to my uncle to have repaired the wrong I have done my master,—but what of Millwood? Must I expose her too? Ungenerous and base! Then Heaven requires it not.—But Heaven requires that I forsake her. What! never see her more! Does Heaven require that?—I hope I may see her, and Heaven not be offended. Presumptuous hope—dearly already have I proved my frailty; should I once more tempt Heaven, I may be left to fall never to rise again. Yet shall I leave her, forever leave her, and not let her know the cause?—she who loves me with such a boundless passion.—Can cruelty be duty? I judge of what she then must feel

by what I now endure. The love of life and fear of shame, opposed by inclination strong as death or shame, like wind and tide in raging conflict met, when neither can prevail, keep me in doubt. How then can I determine?

Enter Thorowgood.

Scene IV

Thorowgood *and* Barnwell.

Thor. Without a cause assigned, or notice given, to absent yourself last night was a fault, young man, and I came to chide you for it, but hope I am prevented. That modest blush, the confusion so visible in your face, speak grief and shame. When we have offended Heaven, it requires no more; and shall man, who needs himself to be forgiven, be harder to appease? If my pardon or love be of moment to your peace, look up, secure of both.

Barn. [*aside*]. This goodness has o'ercome me.—O sir! you know not the nature and extent of my offence, and I should abuse your mistaken bounty to receive 'em. Though I had rather die than speak my shame; though racks could not have forced the guilty secret from my breast, your kindness has.

Thor. Enough, enough; whate'er it be, this concern shows you're convinced, and I am satisfied. [*Aside*] How painful is the sense of guilt to an ingenuous mind—some youthful folly which it were prudent not to enquire into.—When we consider the frail condition of humanity, it may raise our pity, not our wonder, that youth should go astray when Reason, weak at the best when opposed to Inclination, scarce formed and wholly unassisted by Experience, faintly contends, or willingly becomes the slave of Sense. The state of youth is much to be deplored, and the more so because they see it not, they being then to danger most exposed when they are least prepared for their defence.

Barn. It will be known, and you recall your pardon and abhor me.

Thor. I never will; so Heaven confirm to me the pardon of my offences! Yet be upon your guard in this gay, thoughtless season of your life; now, when the sense of pleasure's quick and passion high, the voluptuous appetites raging and fierce demand the strongest curb, take heed of a relapse. When vice becomes habitual, the very power of leaving it is lost.

Barn. Hear me, then, on my knees confess——

Thor. I will not hear a syllable more upon this subject; it were not mercy, but cruelty, to hear what must give you such torment to reveal.

Barn. This generosity amazes and distracts me.

Thor. This remorse makes thee dearer to me than if thou hadst never offended. Whatever is your fault, of this I'm certain; 'twas harder for you to offend than me to pardon.

[*Exit.*

Scene V

Barnwell.

Barn. Villain, villain, villain! basely to wrong so excellent a man! Should I again return to folly—detested thought!—but what of Millwood then?—Why, I renounce her;—I give her up:—the struggle's over and Virtue has prevailed. Reason may convince, but Gratitude compels. This unlooked-for generosity has saved me from destruction.

[*Going.*

Scene VI

To him a Footman.

Footman. Sir, two ladies from your uncle in the country desire to see you.

Barn. [*aside*]. Who should they be?—Tell them I'll wait upon 'em. [*Exit Footman.*

Scene VII

Barnwell.

Barn. —Methinks I dread to see 'em. Guilt, what a coward hast thou made me! Now everything alarms me.

Scene VIII

Another Room in Thorowgood's *House.*

Millwood *and* Lucy; *and to them a Footman.*

Footman. Ladies, he'll wait upon you immediately.

Mill. 'Tis very well.—I thank you.

[*Exit Footman.*

Scene IX

Millwood *and* Lucy.

Enter Barnwell.

Barn. [*aside*]—Confusion! Millwood!

Mill. That angry look tells me that here I'm an unwelcome guest. I feared as much—the unhappy are so everywhere.

Barn. Will nothing but my utter ruin content you?

Mill. Unkind and cruel! Lost myself, your happiness is now my only care.

Barn. How did you gain admission?

Mill. Saying we were desired by your uncle to visit and deliver a message to you, we were received by the family without suspicion, and with much respect directed here.

Barn. Why did you come at all?

Mill. I never shall trouble you more; I'm come to take my leave forever. Such is the malice of my fate. I go hopeless, despairing ever to return. This hour is all I have left me. One short hour is all I have to bestow on love and you, for whom I thought the longest life too short.

Barn. Then we are met to part forever?

Mill. It must be so—yet think not that time or absence ever shall put a period to my grief or make me love you less; though I must leave you, yet condemn me not!

Barn. Condemn you? No, I approve your resolution and rejoice to hear it. 'Tis just; 'tis necessary. I have well weighed, and found it so.

Lucy [*aside*]. I'm afraid the young man has more sense than she thought he had.

Barn. Before you came, I had determined never to see you more.

Mill. [*aside*]. Confusion!

Lucy [*aside*]. Aye! we are all out; this is a turn so unexpected, that I shall make nothing of my part; they must e'en play the scene betwixt themselves.

Mill. 'Twas some relief to think, though absent, you would love me still. But to find, though Fortune had been kind, that you, more cruel and inconstant, had resolved to cast me off—this, as I never could expect, I have not learnt to bear.

Barn. I am sorry to hear you blame in me a resolution that so well becomes us both.

Mill. I have reason for what I do, but you have none.

Barn. Can we want a reason for parting, who have so many to wish we never had met?

Mill. Look on me, Barnwell! Am I deformed or old, that satiety so soon succeeds enjoyment? Nay, look again, am I not she whom yesterday you thought the fairest and the kindest of her sex? whose hand, trembling with ecstasy, you pressed and molded thus, while on my eyes you gazed with such delight, as if desire increased by being fed?

Barn. No more; let me repent my former follies, if possible, without rememb'ring what they were.

Mill. Why?

Barn. Such is my frailty that 'tis dangerous.

Mill. Where is the danger, since we are to part?

Barn. The thought of that already is too painful.

Mill. If it be painful to part, then I may hope at least you do not hate me?

Barn. No—no—I never said I did.—O my heart!—

Mill. Perhaps you pity me?

Barn. I do—I do—indeed, I do.

Mill. You'll think upon me?

Barn. Doubt it not, while I can think at all!

Mill. You may judge an embrace at parting too great a favor, though it would be the last? [*He draws back*] A look shall then suffice—farewell forever. [*Exit with* Lucy.

Scene X

Barnwell.

Barn. If to resolve to suffer be to conquer, I have conquered. Painful victory!

Scene XI

Re-enter Millwood *and* Lucy.

Barnwell, Millwood *and* Lucy.

Mill. One thing I had forgot: I never must return to my own house again. This I thought proper to let you know, lest your mind should change and you should seek in vain to find me there. Forgive me this second intrusion; I only came to give you this caution; and that perhaps was needless.

Barn. I hope it was; yet it is kind, and I must thank you for it.

Mill. [*to* Lucy]. My friend, your arm.—Now I am gone forever. [*Going.*

Barn. One thing more: sure, there's no danger in my knowing where you go?—If you think otherwise——

Mill. [*weeping*]. Alas!

Lucy [*aside*]. We are right, I find; that's my cue.—Ah, dear sir, she's going she knows not whither; but go she must.

Barn. Humanity obliges me to wish you well: why will you thus expose yourself to needless troubles?

Lucy. Nay, there's no help for it. She must quit the town immediately, and the kingdom as soon as possible; it was no small matter, you may be sure, that could make her resolve to leave you.

Mill. No more, my friend; since he for whose dear sake alone I suffer, and am content to suffer, is kind and pities me. Where'er I wander through wilds and deserts, benighted and forlorn, that thought shall give me comfort.

Barn. For my sake! Oh, tell me how; which way am I so cursed as to bring such ruin on thee?

Mill. No matter, I am contented with my lot.

Barn. Leave me not in this incertainty!

Mill. I have said too much.

Barn. How, how am I the cause of your undoing?

Mill. 'Twill but increase your troubles.

Barn. My troubles can't be greater than they are.

Lucy. Well, well, sir; if she won't satisfy you, I will.

Barn. I am bound to you beyond expression.

Mill. Remember, sir, that I desired you not to hear it.

Barn. Begin, and ease my racking expectation!

Lucy. Why, you must know, my lady here was an only child; but her parents, dying while she was young, left her and her fortune (no inconsiderable one, I assure you) to the care of a gentleman who has a good estate of his own.

Mill. Aye, aye, the barbarous man is rich enough—but what are riches when compared to love?

Lucy. For a while he performed the office of a faithful guardian, settled her in a house, hired her servants—but you have seen in what manner she lived; so I need say no more of that.

Mill. How I shall live hereafter, Heaven knows!

Lucy. All things went on as one could wish till, some time ago, his wife dying, he fell violently in love with his charge, and would fain have married her. Now, the man is neither old nor ugly, but a good, personable sort of a man; but I don't know how it was, she could never endure him. In short, her ill usage so provoked him, that he brought in an account of his executorship, wherein he makes her debtor to him——

Mill. A trifle in itself, but more than enough to ruin me, whom, by this unjust account, he had stripped of all before.

Lucy. Now, she having neither money nor friend, except me, who am as unfortunate as herself, he compelled her to pass his account, and give bond for the sum he demanded, but still provided handsomely for her and continued his courtship till, being informed by his spies (truly I suspect some in her own family) that you were entertained at her house and stayed with her all night, he came this morning raving and storming like a madman; talks no more of marriage—so there's no hopes of making up matters that way—but vows her ruin, unless she'll allow him the same favor that he supposes she granted you.

Barn. Must she be ruined, or find her refuge in another's arms?

Mill. He gave me but an hour to resolve in. That's happily spent with you—and now I go.

Barn. To be exposed to all the rigors of the various seasons, the summer's parching heat, and winter's cold; unhoused to wander friendless through the unhospitable world, in misery and want, attended with fear and danger, and pursued by malice and revenge—wouldst thou endure all this for me, and can I do nothing, nothing to prevent it?

Lucy. 'Tis really a pity there can be no way found out!

Barn. [*aside*]. Oh, where are all my resolutions now? Like early vapors, or the morning dew, chased by the sun's warm beams, they're vanished and lost, as though they had never been.

Lucy. Now, I advised her, sir, to comply with the gentleman; that would not only put an end to her troubles, but make her fortune at once.

Barn. Tormenting fiend, away!—I had rather perish, nay, see her perish, than have her saved by him; I will myself prevent her ruin, though with my own.—A moment's patience; I'll return immediately. [*Exit.*

Scene XII

Millwood *and* Lucy.

Lucy. 'Twas well you came, or by what I can perceive you had lost him.

Mill. That, I must confess, was a danger I did not foresee; I was only afraid he should have come without money. You know a house of entertainment like mine is not kept with nothing.

Lucy. That's very true. But then, you should be reasonable in your demands; 'tis pity to discourage a young man.

Scene XIII

Enter Barnwell *with a bag of money.*
Millwood *and* Lucy.

Barn. [*aside*]. What am I about to do!—Now you, who boast your reason all-sufficient, suppose yourselves in my condition, and determine for me whether it's right to let her suffer for my faults, or, by this small addition to my guilt, prevent the ill effects of what is past.

Lucy [*aside*]. These young sinners think everything in the ways of wickedness so strange; but I could tell him that this is nothing but what's very common; for one vice as naturally begets another, as a father a son. But he'll find out that himself if he lives long enough.

Barn. Here, take this, and with it purchase your deliverance; return to your house, and live in peace and safety.

Mill. So I may hope to see you there again.

Barn. Answer me not, but fly—lest, in the agonies of my remorse, I take again what is not mine to give, and abandon thee to want and misery!

Mill. Say but you'll come!

Barn. You are my fate, my heaven, or

my hell; only leave me now, dispose of me hereafter as you please.

[*Exeunt* Millwood *and* Lucy.

Scene XIV

Barnwell.

Barn. What have I done!—Were my resolutions founded on reason and sincerely made—why then has Heaven suffered me to fall? I sought not the occasion; and if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives.—Is virtue inconsistent with itself, or are vice and virtue only empty names? Or do they depend on accidents, beyond our power to produce or to prevent—wherein we have no part, and yet must be determined by the event? But why should I attempt to reason? All is confusion, horror, and remorse: I find I am lost, cast down from all my late erected hopes, and plunged again in guilt, yet scarce know how or why——

Such undistinguished horrors make my brain,
Like hell, the seat of darkness and of pain.

[*Exit.*

ACT III

Scene I

A Room in Thorowgood's *House.*

Thorowgood *and* Trueman *sitting at a table with account books.*

Thor. Methinks, I would not have you only learn the method of merchandise, and practise it hereafter merely as a means of getting wealth; 'twill be well worth your pains to study it as a science. See how it is founded in reason and the nature of things; how it has promoted humanity, as it has opened and yet keeps up an intercourse between nations, far remote from one another in situation, customs and religion; promoting arts, industry, peace and plenty; by mutual benefits diffusing mutual love from pole to pole.

True. Something of this I have considered, and hope, by your assistance, to extend my thoughts much farther. I have observed those countries where trade is promoted and encouraged, do not make discoveries to destroy, but to improve, mankind by love and friendship; to tame the fierce and polish the most savage; to teach them the advantages of honest traffic by taking from them, with their own consent, their useless superfluities, and giving them in return what, from their ignorance in manual arts, their situation, or some other accident, they stand in need of.

Thor. 'Tis justly observed. The populous East, luxuriant, abounds with glittering gems, bright pearls, aromatic spices, and health-restoring drugs. The late found Western World glows with unnumbered veins of gold and silver ore. On every climate and on every country, Heaven has bestowed some good peculiar to itself. It is the industrious merchant's business to collect the various blessings of each soil and climate, and, with the product of the whole, to enrich his native country.—Well! I have examined your accounts; they are not only just, as I have always found them, but regularly kept and fairly entered. I commend your diligence. Method in business is the surest guide. He who neglects it frequently stumbles, and always wanders perplexed, uncertain, and in danger.—Are Barnwell's accounts ready for my inspection? He does not use to be the last on these occasions.

True. Upon receiving your orders he retired, I thought, in some confusion. If you please, I'll go and hasten him.—I hope he hasn't been guilty of any neglect.

Thor. I'm now going to the Exchange; let him know, at my return I expect to find him ready.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Enter Maria *with a book; sits and reads.*

Mar. How forcible is truth! The weakest mind, inspired with love of that, fixed and collected in itself, with indifference beholds the united force of earth and hell opposing. Such souls are raised above the sense of pain, or so supported that they regard it not. The martyr cheaply purchases his heaven. Small are his sufferings, great is his reward; not so the wretch who combats love with duty, when the mind, weakened and dissolved by the soft passion, feeble and hopeless opposes its own desires.—What is an hour, a day, a year of pain, to a whole life of tortures such as these?

Scene III

Enter Trueman.

Trueman *and* Maria.

True. O Barnwell! O my friend, how art thou fallen!

Mar. Ha! Barnwell! What of him? Speak, say, what of Barnwell?

True. 'Tis not to be concealed. I've news to tell of him that will afflict your generous father, yourself, and all who knew him.

Mar. Defend us Heaven!

True. I cannot speak it.—See there.

[*Gives a letter.* Maria *reads.*

Trueman,

I know my absence will surprise my honored master and yourself; and the more

when you shall understand that the reason of my withdrawing, is my having embezzled part of the cash with which I was entrusted. After this, 'tis needless to inform you that I intend never to return again. Though this might have been known by examining my accounts, yet, to prevent that unnecessary trouble, and to cut off all fruitless expectations of my return, I have left this from the lost

George Barnwell

True. Lost indeed! Yet how he should be guilty of what he there charges himself withal, raises my wonder equal to my grief. Never had youth a higher sense of virtue: justly he thought, and as he thought he practised. Never was life more regular than his—an understanding uncommon at his years—an open, generous manliness of temper—his manners easy, unaffected, and engaging.

Mar. This and much more you might have said with truth. He was the delight of every eye, and joy of every heart that knew him.

True. Since such he was, and was my friend, can I support his loss?—See! the fairest and happiest maid this wealthy city boasts, kindly condescends to weep for thy unhappy fate, poor ruined Barnwell!

Mar. Trueman, do you think a soul so delicate as his, so sensible of shame, can e'er submit to live a slave to vice?

True. Never, never! So well I know him, I'm sure this act of his, so contrary to his nature, must have been caused by some unavoidable necessity.

Mar. Is there no means yet to preserve him?

True. Oh, that there were! But few men recover reputation lost—a merchant, never. Nor would he, I fear, though I should find him, ever be brought to look his injured master in the face.

Mar. I fear as much—and therefore would never have my father know it.

True. That's impossible.

Mar. What's the sum?

True. 'Tis considerable. I've marked it here, to show it, with the letter, to your father, at his return.

Mar. If I should supply the money, could you so dispose of that, and the account, as to conceal this unhappy mismanagement from my father?

True. Nothing more easy. But can you intend it? Will you save a helpless wretch from ruin? Oh! 'twere an act worthy such exalted virtue as Maria's. Sure, Heaven in mercy to my friend inspired the generous thought!

Mar. Doubt not but I would purchase so great a happiness at a much dearer price.—But how shall he be found?

True. Trust to my diligence for that. In the meantime, I'll conceal his absence from your father, or find such excuses for it that the real cause shall never be suspected.

Mar. In attempting to save from shame one whom we hope may yet return to virtue, to Heaven and you, the judges of this action, I appeal, whether I have done anything misbecoming my sex and character.

True. Earth must approve the deed, and Heaven, I doubt not, will reward it.

Mar. If Heaven succeed it, I am well rewarded. A virgin's fame is sullied by suspicion's slightest breath; and therefore as this must be a secret from my father and the world, for Barnwell's sake, for mine, let it be so to him! [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

Millwood's *House.*

Lucy *and* Blunt.

Lucy. Well! what do you think of Millwood's conduct now?

Blunt. I own it is surprising; I don't know which to admire most, her feigned or his real passion—though I have sometimes been afraid that her avarice would discover her. But his youth and want of experience make it the easier to impose on him.

Lucy. No, it is his love. To do him justice, notwithstanding his youth, he don't want understanding; but you men are much easier imposed on in these affairs than your vanity will allow you to believe. Let me see the wisest of you all as much in love with me as Barnwell is with Millwood, and I'll engage to make as great a fool of him.

Blunt. And all circumstances considered, to make as much money of him too?

Lucy. I can't answer for that. Her artifice in making him rob his master at first, and the various stratagems by which she has obliged him to continue in that course, astonish even me, who know her so well.

Blunt. But then, you are to consider that the money was his master's.

Lucy. There was the difficulty of it. Had it been his own, it had been nothing. Were the world his, she might have it for a smile.—But those golden days are done; he's ruined, and Millwood's hopes of farther profits there are at an end.

Blunt. That's no more than we all expected.

Lucy. Being called by his master to make up his accounts, he was forced to quit his house and service, and wisely flies to Millwood for relief and entertainment.

Blunt. I have not heard of this before! How did she receive him?

Lucy. As you would expect. She wondered what he meant; was astonished at his impudence; and, with an air of modesty peculiar to herself, swore so heartily that she never saw him before, that she put me out of countenance.

Blunt. That's much, indeed! But how did Barnwell behave?

Lucy. He grieved, and, at length, enraged at this barbarous treatment, was preparing to be gone; and, making toward the door, showed a bag of money which he had stol'n from his master—the last he's ever like to have from thence.

Blunt. But then Millwood?

Lucy. Aye, she, with her usual address, returned to her old arts of lying, swearing, and dissembling. Hung on his neck, and wept, and swore 'twas meant in jest, till the easy fool, melted into tears, threw the money into her lap, and swore he had rather die than think her false.

Blunt. Strange infatuation!

Lucy. But what followed was stranger still. As doubts and fears, followed by reconcilement, ever increase love where the passion is sincere, so in him it caused so wild a transport of excessive fondness, such joy, such grief, such pleasure, and such anguish, that nature in him seemed sinking with the weight, and the charmed soul disposed to quit his breast for hers. Just then, when every passion with lawless anarchy prevailed, and reason was in the raging tempest lost, the cruel, artful Millwood prevailed upon the wretched youth to promise what I tremble but to think on.

Blunt. I am amazed! What can it be?

Lucy. You will be more so to hear it is to attempt the life of his nearest relation and best benefactor.

Blunt. His uncle, whom we have often heard him speak of as a gentleman of a large estate and fair character in the country where he lives?

Lucy. The same. She was no sooner possessed of the last dear purchase of his ruin, but her avarice, insatiate as the grave, demands this horrid sacrifice—Barnwell's near relation; and unsuspected virtue must give too easy means to seize the good man's treasure, whose blood must seal the dreadful secret, and prevent the terrors of her guilty fears.

Blunt. Is it possible she could persuade him to do an act like that? He is, by nature, honest, grateful, compassionate, and generous; and though his love and her artful persuasions have wrought him to practise what he most abhors, yet we all can witness for him with what reluctance he has still complied! So many tears he shed o'er each offence, as might, if possible, sanctify theft, and make a merit of a crime.

Lucy. 'Tis true; at the naming the murder of his uncle he started into rage, and, breaking from her arms, where she till then had held him with well dissembled love and false endearments, called her "cruel monster, devil," and told her she was born for his destruction. She thought it not for her purpose to meet his rage with rage, but affected a most passionate fit of grief—railed at her fate and cursed her wayward stars, that still her wants should force her to press him to act such deeds as she must needs abhor as well as he: but told him, necessity had no law, and love no bounds; that therefore he never truly loved, but meant, in her necessity, to forsake her; then kneeled, and swore that since, by his refusal, he had given her cause to doubt his love, she never would see him more—unless, to prove it true, he robbed his uncle to supply her wants, and murdered him to keep it from discovery.

Blunt. I am astonished! What said he?

Lucy. Speechless he stood; but in his face you might have read that various passions tore his very soul. Oft he, in anguish, threw his eyes towards heaven, and then as often bent their beams on her; then wept and groaned, and beat his breast. At length, with horror, not to be expressed, he cried: "Thou cursed fair! have I not given dreadful proofs of love? What drew me from my youthful innocence, to stain my then unspotted soul, but love? What caused me to rob my gentle master, but cursed love? What makes me now a fugitive from his service, loathed by myself, and scorned by all the world, but love? What fills my eyes with tears, my soul with torture never felt on this side death before? Why, love, love, love! And why, above all, do I resolve" (for, tearing his hair, he cried, "I do resolve") "to kill my uncle?"

Blunt. Was she not moved? It makes me weep to hear the sad relation.

Lucy. Yes, with joy, that she had gained her point. She gave him no time to cool, but urged him to attempt it instantly. He's now gone; if he performs it and escapes, there's more money for her; if not, he'll ne'er return, and then she's fairly rid of him.

Blunt. 'Tis time the world was rid of such a monster.

Lucy. If we don't do our endeavors to prevent this murder, we are as bad as she.

Blunt. I'm afraid it is too late.

Lucy. Perhaps not.—Her barbarity to Barnwell makes me hate her. We've run too great a length with her already. I did not think her or myself so wicked as I find, upon reflection, we are.

Blunt. 'Tis true, we have all been too much so. But there is something so horrid in murder, that all other crimes seem nothing when compared to that. I would not be

involved in the guilt of that for all the world.

Lucy. Nor I, Heaven knows; therefore, let us clear ourselves by doing all that is in our power to prevent it. I have just thought of a way that, to me, seems probable. Will you join with me to detect this curs'd design?

Blunt. With all my heart.—How else shall I clear myself? He who knows of a murder intended to be committed and does not discover it, in the eye of the law and reason is a murderer.

Lucy. Let us lose no time; I'll acquaint you with the particulars as we go. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V

A walk at some distance from a country seat.

Barnwell.

Barn. A dismal gloom obscures the face of day; either the sun has slipped behind a cloud, or journeys down the west of heaven with more than common speed to avoid the sight of what I'm doomed to act. Since I set forth on this accursed design, where'er I tread, methinks, the solid earth trembles beneath my feet.—Yonder limpid stream, whose hoary fall has made a natural cascade, as I passed by, in doleful accents seemed to murmur "Murder." The earth, the air, and water, seemed concerned—but that's not strange; the world is punished, and nature feels the shock when Providence permits a good man's fall!—Just Heaven! Then what should I be? For him that was my father's only brother, and since his death has been to me a father, who took me up an infant, and an orphan; reared me with tenderest care, and still indulged me with most paternal fondness—yet here I stand avowed his destined murderer.—I stiffen with horror at my own impiety.—'Tis yet unperformed. What if I quit my bloody purpose, and fly the place! [*Going, then stops*]—But whither, O whither, shall I fly? My master's once-friendly doors are ever shut against me; and without money Millwood will never see me more, and life is not to be endured without her. She's got such firm possession of my heart, and governs there with such despotic sway—aye, there's the cause of all my sin and sorrow! 'Tis more than love; 'tis the fever of the soul and madness of desire. In vain does nature, reason, conscience, all oppose it; the impetuous passion bears down all before it, and drives me on to lust, to theft, and murder. O Conscience! feeble guide to Virtue, who only shows us when we go astray, but wants the power to stop us in our course!—Ha, in yonder shady walk I see my uncle. He's alone. Now for my disguise! [*Plucks out a vizor*] This is his hour of private meditation. Thus daily he prepares his soul for heaven, whilst I—but what have I to do with heaven? Ha! No struggles, Conscience!

Hence, hence, Remorse, and ev'ry thought that's good:
The storm that lust began must end in blood.

[*Puts on the vizor, draws a pistol and exit.*

Scene VI

A close walk in a wood.

Uncle.

Uncle. If I was superstitious, I should fear some danger lurked unseen, or death were nigh.—A heavy melancholy clouds my spirits; my imagination is filled with gashly forms of dreary graves and bodies changed by death, when the pale, lengthened visage attracts each weeping eye, and fills the musing soul, at once, with grief and horror, pity and aversion.—I will indulge the thought. The wise man prepares himself for death, by making it familiar to his mind. When strong reflections hold the mirror near, and the living in the dead behold their future selves, how does each inordinate passion and desire cease, or sicken at the view? The mind scarce moves; the blood, curdling and chilled, creeps slowly through the veins—fixed, still, and motionless, like the solemn object of our thoughts. We are almost at present what we must be hereafter, till curiosity awakes the soul and sets it on inquiry.

Scene VII

Uncle. George Barnwell *at a distance.*

Uncle. O Death, thou strange mysterious power—seen every day, yet never understood but by the incommunicative dead—what art thou? The extensive mind of man, that with a thought circles the earth's vast globe, sinks to the centre, or ascends above the stars; that world's exotic finds, or thinks it finds—thy thick clouds attempts to pass in vain, lost and bewildered in the horrid gloom; defeated, she returns more doubtful than before, of nothing certain but of labor lost.

[*During this speech,* Barnwell *sometimes presents the pistol and draws it back again; at last he drops it, at which his uncle starts and draws his sword.*

Barn. Oh, 'tis impossible!

Uncle. A man so near me, armed and masked!

Barn. Nay, then there's no retreat.

[*Plucks a poniard from his bosom, and stabs him.*

Uncle. Oh! I am slain! All-gracious Heaven, regard the prayer of thy dying servant! Bless, with thy choicest blessings, my dearest nephew; forgive my murderer, and take my fleeting soul to endless mercy!

[Barnwell *throws off his mask, runs to him, and, kneeling by him, raises and chafes him.*

Barn. Expiring saint! Oh, murdered, martyred uncle! Lift up your dying eyes, and view your nephew in your murderer! Oh, do not look so tenderly upon me! Let indignation lighten from your eyes, and blast me ere you die!—By heaven, he weeps in pity of my woes. Tears,—tears, for blood! The murdered, in the agonies of death, weeps for his murderer.—Oh, speak your pious purpose—pronounce my pardon then—and take me with you!—He would, but cannot. Oh, why, with such fond affection, do you press my murdering hand?—What! will you kiss me? [*Kisses him. Uncle groans and dies*] He's gone forever—and oh! I follow. [*Swoons away upon his uncle's dead body*] Do I still live to press the suffering bosom of the earth? Do I still breathe, and taint with my infectious breath the wholesome air? Let Heaven from its high throne, in justice or in mercy, now look down on that dear murdered saint and me the murderer. And, if his vengeance spares, let pity strike and end my wretched being!—Murder the worst of crimes, and parricide the worst of murders, and this the worst of parricides! Cain, who stands on record from the birth of time, and must to its last final period, as accursed, slew a brother favored above him. Detested Nero by another's hand dispatched a mother that he feared and hated. But I, with my own hand, have murdered a brother, mother, father, and a friend most loving and beloved. This execrable act of mine's without a parallel. Oh, may it ever stand alone—the last of murders, as it is the worst!

The rich man thus, in torment and despair,
Preferred his vain but charitable prayer.
The fool, his own soul lost, would fain be wise
For others' good; but Heaven his suit denies.
By laws and means well known we stand or fall,
And one eternal rule remains for all.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV

Scene I

A Room in Thorowgood's *House.*

Maria.

Mar. How falsely do they judge who censure or applaud, as we're afflicted or rewarded here! I know I am unhappy, yet cannot charge myself with any crime more than the common frailties of our kind, that should provoke just Heaven to mark me out for sufferings so uncommon and severe. Falsely to accuse ourselves, Heaven must abhor; then it is just and right that innocence should suffer, for Heaven must be just in all its ways. Perhaps by that they are kept from moral evils much worse than penal, or more improved in virtue; or may not the lesser ills that they sustain be the means of greater good to others? Might all the joyless days and sleepless nights that I have passed but purchase peace for thee——

Thou dear, dear cause of all my grief and pain,
Small were the loss, and infinite the gain;
Though to the grave in secret love I pine,
So life and fame and happiness were thine.

Scene II

Enter Trueman.

Trueman *and* Maria.

Mar. What news of Barnwell?

True. None. I have sought him with the greatest diligence, but all in vain.

Mar. Doth my father yet suspect the cause of his absenting himself?

True. All appeared so just and fair to him, it is not possible he ever should; but his absence will no longer be concealed. Your father's wise; and, though he seems to hearken to the friendly excuses I would make for Barnwell, yet I am afraid he regards 'em only as such, without suffering them to influence his judgment.

Mar. How does the unhappy youth defeat all our designs to serve him! Yet I can never repent what we have done. Should he return, 'twill make his reconciliation with my father easier, and preserve him from future reproach from a malicious, unforgiving world.

Scene III

To them Thorowgood *and* Lucy.

Thor. This woman here has given me a sad, and (bating some circumstances) too probable account of Barnwell's defection.

Lucy. I am sorry, sir, that my frank confession of my former unhappy course of life should cause you to suspect my truth on this occasion.

Thor. It is not that; your confession has in it all the appearance of truth. [*To them*] Among many other particulars, she informs me that Barnwell has been influenced to break his trust, and wrong me at several times of considerable sums of money; now,

as I know this to be false, I would fain doubt the whole of her relation, too dreadful to be willingly believed.

Mar. Sir, your pardon; I find myself on a sudden so indisposed, that I must retire. —[*Aside*] Providence opposes all attempts to save him. Poor ruined Barnwell! Wretched, lost Maria! [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

THOROWGOOD, TRUEMAN *and* LUCY.

Thor. How am I distressed on every side! Pity for that unhappy youth, fear for the life of a much valued friend—and then my child, the only joy and hope of my declining life! Her melancholy increases hourly, and gives me painful apprehensions of her loss.—O Trueman! this person informs me that your friend, at the instigation of an impious woman, is gone to rob and murder his venerable uncle.

True. Oh, execrable deed! I am blasted with the horror of the thought.

Lucy. This delay may ruin all.

Thor. What to do or think I know not. That he ever wronged me, I know is false; the rest may be so too—there's all my hope.

True. Trust not to that; rather suppose all true than lose a moment's time. Even now the horrid deed may be a doing—dreadful imagination! Or it may be done, and we are vainly debating on the means to prevent what is already past.

Thor. [*aside*]. This earnestness convinces me that he knows more than he has yet discovered.—What ho! without there! who waits?

SCENE V

To them a Servant.

Thor. Order the groom to saddle the swiftest horse and prepare himself to set out with speed!—An affair of life and death demands his diligence. [*Exit Servant.*

SCENE VI

THOROWGOOD, TRUEMAN *and* LUCY.

Thor. [*to* LUCY]. For you, whose behavior on this occasion I have no time to commend as it deserves, I must engage your farther assistance. Return and observe this Millwood till I come. I have your directions, and will follow you as soon as possible.

[*Exit* LUCY.

SCENE VII

THOROWGOOD *and* TRUEMAN.

Thor. Trueman, you, I am sure, would not be idle on this occasion, [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII

TRUEMAN.

True. He only who is a friend can judge of my distress. [*Exit.*

SCENE IX

MILLWOOD'S *House.*

MILLWOOD.

Mill. I wish I knew the event of his design; the attempt without success would ruin him.—Well! what have I to apprehend from that? I fear too much. The mischief being only intended, his friends, in pity of his youth, turn all their rage on me. I should have thought of that before.—Suppose the deed done: then, and then only, I shall be secure. Or what if he returns without attempting it at all?

SCENE X

MILLWOOD, *and* BARNWELL, *bloody.*

Mill. But he is here, and I have done him wrong; his bloody hands show he has done the deed, but show he wants the prudence to conceal it.

Barn. Where shall I hide me? whither shall I fly to avoid the swift, unerring hand of Justice?

Mill. Dismiss those fears. Though thousands had pursued you to the door, yet being entered here, you are safe as innocence. I have such a cavern, by art so cunningly contrived, that the piercing eyes of Jealousy and Revenge may search in vain, nor find the entrance to the safe retreat. There will I hide you, if any danger's near.

Barn. Oh, hide me from myself, if it be possible; for while I bear my conscience in my bosom, though I were hid where man's eye never saw nor light e'er dawned, 'twere all in vain. For that inmate—that impartial judge, will try, convict, and sentence me for murder, and execute me with never-ending torments. Behold these hands all crimsoned o'er with my dear uncle's blood! Here's a sight to make a statue start with horror, or turn a living man into a statue.

Mill. Ridiculous! Then, it seems you are afraid of your own shadow, or, what's less than a shadow, your conscience.

Barn. Though to man unknown I did the accursed act, what can we hide from Heaven's omniscient eye?

Mill. No more of this stuff! What advantage have you made of his death? or what advantage may yet be made of it? Did you secure the keys of his treasure—those no doubt were about him. What gold,

what jewels, or what else of value have you brought me?

Barn. Think you I added sacrilege to murder? Oh! had you seen him as his life flowed from him in a crimson flood, and heard him praying for me by the double name of nephew and of murderer! Alas, alas! he knew not then that his nephew was his murderer. How would you have wished, as I did, though you had a thousand years of life to come, to have given them all to have lengthened his one hour! But, being dead, I fled the sight of what my hands had done, nor could I, to have gained the empire of the world, have violated by theft his sacred corpse.

Mill. Whining, preposterous, canting villain, to murder your uncle, rob him of life, nature's first, last, dear prerogative, after which there's no injury—then fear to take what he no longer wanted, and bring to me your penury and guilt! Do you think I'll hazard my reputation—nay, my life, to entertain you?

Barn. Oh! Millwood! this from thee!—But I have done; if you hate me, if you wish me dead, then are you happy—for oh! 'tis sure my grief will quickly end me.

Mill. [*aside*]. In his madness he will discover all and involve me in his ruin. We are on a precipice from whence there's no retreat for both—then, to preserve myself. [*Pauses*] There is no other way,—'tis dreadful; but reflection comes too late when danger's pressing, and there's no room for choice. It must be done. [*Stamps.*

Scene XI

To them a Servant.

Mill. Fetch me an officer, and seize this villain: he has confessed himself a murderer. Should I let him escape, I justly might be thought as bad as he.

[*Exit Servant.*

Scene XII

Millwood *and* Barnwell.

Barn. O Millwood! sure thou dost not, cannot mean it. Stop the messenger! Upon my knees I beg you, call him back! 'Tis fit I die indeed, but not by you. I will this instant deliver myself into the hands of justice; indeed I will, for death is all I wish. But thy ingratitude so tears my wounded soul, 'tis worse ten thousand times than death with torture.

Mill. Call it what you will, I am willing to live, and live secure—which nothing but your death can warrant.

Barn. If there be a pitch of wickedness that seats the author beyond the reach of vengeance, you must be secure. But what remains for me but a dismal dungeon, hard-galling fetters, an awful trial, and ignominious death—justly to fall unpitied and abhorred? after death to be suspended between heaven and earth, a dreadful spectacle, the warning and horror of a gaping crowd! This I could bear—nay, wish not to avoid, had it come from any hand but thine.

Scene XIII

Millwood *and* Barnwell. *Enter* Blunt, *Officer and Attendants.*

Mill. Heaven defend me! Conceal a murderer? Here, sir; take this youth into your custody. I accuse him of murder, and will appear to make good my charge.

[*They seize him.*

Barn. To whom, of what, or how shall I complain? I'll not accuse her: the hand of Heaven is in it, and this the punishment of lust and parricide. Yet Heaven, that justly cuts me off, still suffers her to live, perhaps to punish others. Tremendous mercy! so fiends are cursed with immortality, to be the executioners of Heaven.—

Be warned, ye youths, who see my sad despair,
Avoid lewd women, false as they are fair;
By reason guided, honest joys pursue;
The fair, to honor and to virtue true,
Just to herself, will ne'er be false to you.
By my example learn to shun my fate;
(How wretched is the man who's wise too late!)
Ere innocence, and fame, and life, be lost,
Here purchase wisdom, cheaply, at my cost!

[*Exit with Officers.*

Scene XIV

Millwood *and* Blunt.

Mill. Where's Lucy? Why is she absent at such a time?

Blunt. Would I had been so too, thou devil!

Mill. Insolent! This to me!

Blunt. The worst that we know of the devil is, that he first seduces to sin and then betrays to punishment. [*Exit.*

Scene XV

Millwood.

Mill. They disapprove of my conduct, and mean to take this opportunity to set up for themselves. My ruin is resolved. I see my danger, but scorn it and them. I was not born to fall by such weak instruments.

[*Going.*

Scene XVI

Enter Thorowgood.

Thorowgood *and* Millwood.

Thor. Where is this scandal of her own sex, and curse of ours?

Mill. What means this insolence? Who do you seek?

Thor. Millwood.

Mill. Well, you have found her, then. I am Millwood.

Thor. Then you are the most impious wretch that e'er the sun beheld.

Mill. From your appearance I should have expected wisdom and moderation, but your manners belie your aspect.—What is your business here? I know you not.

Thor. Hereafter you may know me better; I am Barnwell's master.

Mill. Then you are master to a villain—which, I think, is not much to your credit.

Thor. Had he been as much above thy arts as my credit is superior to thy malice, I need not blush to own him.

Mill. My arts? I don't understand you, sir. If he has done amiss, what's that to me? Was he my servant, or yours? You should have taught him better.

Thor. Why should I wonder to find such uncommon impudence in one arrived to such a height of wickedness? When innocence is banished, modesty soon follows.—Know, sorceress, I'm not ignorant of any of your arts, by which you first deceived the unwary youth. I know how, step by step, you've led him on, reluctant and unwilling from crime to crime, to this last horrid act, which you contrived and, by your cursed wiles, even forced him to commit—and then betrayed him.

Mill. [*aside*]. Ha! Lucy has got the advantage of me, and accused me first. Unless I can turn the accusation and fix it upon her and Blunt, I am lost.

Thor. Had I known your cruel design sooner, it had been prevented. To see you punished as the law directs, is all that now remains.—Poor satisfaction! for he, innocent as he is, compared to you, must suffer too. But Heaven, who knows our frame and graciously distinguishes between frailty and presumption, will make a difference, though man cannot, who sees not the heart, but only judges by the outward action.

Mill. I find, sir, we are both unhappy in our servants. I was surprised at such ill treatment from a gentleman of your appearance, without cause, and therefore too hastily returned it; for which I ask your pardon. I now perceive you have been so far imposed on as to think me engaged in a former correspondence with your servant, and, some way or other, accessory to his undoing.

Thor. I charge you as the cause, the sole cause, of all his guilt and all his suffering—of all he now endures, and must endure, till a violent and shameful death shall put a dreadful period to his life and miseries together.

Mill. 'Tis very strange! But who's secure from scandal and detraction?—So far from contributing to his ruin, I never spoke to him till since that fatal accident, which I lament as much as you. 'Tis true, I have a servant, on whose account he has of late frequented my house; if she has abused my good opinion of her, am I to blame? Hasn't Barnwell done the same by you?

Thor. I hear you; pray, go on!

Mill. I have been informed he had a violent passion for her, and she for him; but I always thought it innocent. I know her poor, and given to expensive pleasures. Now who can tell but she may have influenced the amorous youth to commit this murder, to supply her extravagancies? It must be so; I now recollect a thousand circumstances that confirm it. I'll have her and a man-servant that I suspect as an accomplice, secured immediately. I hope, sir, you will lay aside your ill-grounded suspicions of me, and join to punish the real contrivers of this bloody deed. [*Offers to go.*

Thor. Madam, you pass not this way! I see your design, but shall protect them from your malice.

Mill. I hope you will not use your influence, and the credit of your name, to screen such guilty wretches. Consider, sir, the wickedness of persuading a thoughtless youth to such a crime!

Thor. I do—and of betraying him when it was done.

Mill. That which you call betraying him, may convince you of my innocence. She who loves him, though she contrived the murder, would never have delivered him into the hands of justice, as I, struck with the horror of his crimes, have done.

Thor. [*aside*]. How should an unexperienced youth escape her snares? The powerful magic of her wit and form might betray the wisest to simple dotage, and fire the blood that age had froze long since. Even I, that with just prejudice came prepared, had, by her artful story, been deceived, but that my strong conviction of her guilt makes even a doubt impossible. [*To* Millwood] Those whom subtilely you would accuse, you know are your accusers; and, what proves unanswerably their innocence and your guilt, they accused you before the deed was done, and did all that was in their power to have prevented it.

Mill. Sir, you are very hard to be con-

vinced; but I have such a proof, which, when produced, will silence all objections. [*Exit.*

Scene XVII

Thorowgood. *Enter* Lucy, Trueman, Blunt, *Officers, etc.*

Lucy. Gentlemen, pray, place yourselves, some on one side of that door, and some on the other; watch her entrance, and act as your prudence shall direct you.—This way! [*To* Thorowgood] and note her behavior. I have observed her; she's driven to the last extremity, and is forming some desperate resolution. I guess at her design.

Scene XVIII

To them Millwood *with a pistol.* Trueman *secures her.*

True. Here thy power of doing mischief ends, deceitful, cruel, bloody woman!

Mill. Fool, hypocrite, villain—man! Thou canst not call me that.

True. To call thee woman were to wrong the sex, thou devil!

Mill. That imaginary being is an emblem of thy cursed sex collected—a mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness and that of all mankind.

True. Think not by aggravating the fault of others to extenuate thy own, of which the abuse of such uncommon perfections of mind and body is not the least!

Mill. If such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robbed me of 'em ere I knew their worth, then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came, and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdained, and yet disdains, dependence and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw, secured the worst of men from both. I found it therefore necessary to be rich, and to that end I summoned all my arts. You call 'em wicked; be it so! They were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

Thor. Sure, none but the worst of men conversed with thee.

Mill. Men of all degrees and all professions I have known, yet found no difference but in their several capacities; all were alike wicked to the utmost of their power. In pride, contention, avarice, cruelty and revenge, the reverend priesthood were my unerring guides. From suburb-magistrates, who live by ruined reputations, as the unhospitable natives of Cornwall do by shipwrecks, I learned that to charge my innocent neighbors with my crimes, was to merit their protection; for to screen the guilty, is the less scandalous when many are suspected, and detraction, like darkness and death, blackens all objects and levels all distinction. Such are your venal magistrates, who favor none but such as, by their office, they are sworn to punish. With them, not to be guilty is the worst of crimes, and large fees privately paid is every needful virtue.

Thor. Your practice has sufficiently discovered your contempt of laws, both human and divine; no wonder then that you should hate the officers of both.

Mill. I hate you all! I know you, and expect no mercy. Nay, I ask for none; I have done nothing that I am sorry for. I followed my inclinations, and that the best of you does every day. All actions are alike natural and indifferent to man and beast, who devour, or are devoured, as they meet with others weaker or stronger than themselves.

Thor. What pity it is, a mind so comprehensive, daring, and inquisitive, should be a stranger to religion's sweet, but powerful, charms!

Mill. I am not fool enough to be an atheist, though I have known enough of men's hypocrisy to make a thousand simple women so. Whatever religion is in itself—as practised by mankind, it has caused the evils you say it was designed to cure. War, plague, and famine, has not destroyed so many of the human race as this pretended piety has done, and with such barbarous cruelty—as if the only way to honor Heaven, were to turn the present world into hell.

Thor. Truth is truth, though from an enemy and spoke in malice. You bloody, blind, and superstitious bigots, how will you answer this?

Mill. What are your laws, of which you make your boast, but the fool's wisdom and the coward's valor—the instrument and screen of all your villainies, by which you punish in others what you act yourselves, or would have acted had you been in their circumstances? The judge who condemns the poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor. Thus you go on deceiving and being deceived, harassing, and plaguing, and destroying one another: but women are your universal prey.

Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,
With cruel arts you labor to destroy;
A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.
O may, from hence, each violated maid,
By flatt'ring, faithless, barb'rous man betrayed,
When robbed of innocence, and virgin fame,
From your destruction raise a nobler name;

To right their sex's wrongs devote their mind,
And future Millwoods prove, to plague mankind! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

Scene I

A Room in a Prison.

Thorowgood, Blunt *and* Lucy.

Thor. I have recommended to Barnwell a reverend divine, whose judgment and integrity I am well acquainted with. Nor has Millwood been neglected; but she, unhappy woman, still obstinate, refuses his assistance.

Lucy. This pious charity to the afflicted well becomes your character; yet pardon me, sir, if I wonder you were not at their trial.

Thor. I knew it was impossible to save him, and I and my family bear so great a part in his distress, that to have been present would have aggravated our sorrows without relieving his.

Blunt. It was mournful, indeed. Barnwell's youth and modest deportment, as he passed, drew tears from every eye. When placed at the bar and arraigned before the reverend judges, with many tears and interrupting sobs he confessed and aggravated his offences, without accusing or once reflecting on Millwood, the shameless author of his ruin—who, dauntless and unconcerned, stood by his side, viewing with visible pride and contempt the vast assembly, who all with sympathizing sorrow wept for the wretched youth. Millwood, when called upon to answer, loudly insisted upon her innocence, and made an artful and a bold defence; but, finding all in vain, the impartial jury and the learned bench concurring to find her guilty, how did she curse herself, poor Barnwell, us, her judges, all mankind! But what could that avail? She was condemned, and is this day to suffer with him.

Thor. The time draws on. I am going to visit Barnwell, as you are Millwood.

Lucy. We have not wronged her; yet I dread this interview. She's proud, impatient, wrathful, and unforgiving. To be the branded instruments of vengeance, to suffer in her shame and sympathize with her in all she suffers, is the tribute we must pay for our former ill-spent lives and long confederacy with her in wickedness.

Thor. Happy for you it ended when it did! What you have done against Millwood, I know proceeded from a just abhorrence of her crimes, free from interest, malice, or revenge. Proselytes to virtue should be encouraged. Pursue your proposed reformation, and know me hereafter for your friend.

Lucy. This is a blessing as unhoped for as unmerited; but Heaven, that snatched us from impending ruin, sure intends you as its instrument to secure us from apostasy.

Thor. With gratitude to impute your deliverance to Heaven is just. Many, less virtuously disposed than Barnwell was, have never fallen in the manner he has done;—may not such owe their safety rather to Providence than to themselves? With pity and compassion let us judge him! Great were his faults, but strong was the temptation. Let his ruin learn us diffidence, humanity, and circumspection; for we, who wonder at his fate—perhaps, had we like him been tried, like him we had fallen too.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

A Dungeon. A Table and Lamp.

Barnwell, *reading. Enter* Thorowgood.

Thor. See there the bitter fruits of passion's detested reign and sensual appetite indulged—severe reflections, penitence, and tears.

Barn. My honored, injured master, whose goodness has covered me a thousand times with shame, forgive this last unwilling disrespect! Indeed, I saw you not.

Thor. 'Tis well; I hope you were better employed in viewing of yourself. Your journey's long, your time for preparation almost spent. I sent a reverend divine to teach you to improve it, and should be glad to hear of his success.

Barn. The word of truth, which he recommended for my constant companion in this my sad retirement, has at length removed the doubts I labored under. From thence I've learned the infinite extent of heavenly mercy; that my offences, though great, are not unpardonable; and that 'tis not my interest only, but my duty, to believe and to rejoice in that hope: so shall Heaven receive the glory, and future penitents the profit of my example.

Thor. Go on! How happy am I who live to see this!

Barn. 'Tis wonderful that words should charm despair, speak peace and pardon to a murderer's conscience! But truth and mercy flow in every sentence, attended with force and energy divine. How shall I describe my present state of mind? I hope in doubt, and trembling I rejoice. I feel my grief increase, even as my fears give way. Joy and gratitude now supply more tears than the horror and anguish of despair before.

Thor. These are the genuine signs of true repentance, the only preparatory certain way to everlasting peace.—Oh, the joy it gives

to see a soul formed and prepared for Heaven! For this the faithful minister devotes himself to meditation, abstinence, and prayer, shunning the vain delights of sensual joys, and daily dies that others may live forever. For this he turns the sacred volumes o'er, and spends his life in painful search of truth. The love of riches and the lust of power, he looks on with just contempt and detestation, who only counts for wealth the souls he wins, and whose highest ambition is to serve mankind. If the reward of all his pains be to preserve one soul from wandering, or turn one from the error of his ways, how does he then rejoice, and own his little labors overpaid!

Barn. What do I owe for all your generous kindness? But though I cannot, Heaven can and will reward you.

Thor. To see thee thus is joy too great for words. Farewell! Heaven strengthen thee! Farewell!

Barn. O sir, there's something I could say if my sad, swelling heart would give me leave.

Thor. Give it vent a while and try.

Barn. I had a friend—'tis true I am unworthy, yet methinks your generous example might persuade—could I not see him once before I go from whence there's no return?

Thor. He's coming, and as much thy friend as ever. [*Aside*] But I'll not anticipate his sorrow; too soon he'll see the sad effect of this contagious ruin.—This torrent of domestic misery bears too hard upon me; I must retire to indulge a weakness I find impossible to overcome.—Much loved and much lamented youth, farewell! Heaven strengthen thee! Eternally farewell!

Barn. The best of masters and of men, farewell! While I live, let me not want your prayers!

Thor. Thou shalt not. Thy peace being made with Heaven, Death's already vanquished; bear a little longer the pains that attend this transitory life, and cease from pain forever. [*Exit.*

Scene III

Barnwell.

Barn. I find a power within that bears my soul above the fears of death, and, spite of conscious shame and guilt, gives me a taste of pleasure more than mortal.

Scene IV

Enter to him Trueman *and the Keeper.*

Keeper. Sir, there's the prisoner. [*Exit.*

Scene V

Barnwell *and* Trueman.

Barn. Trueman—my friend, whom I so wished to see! Yet now he's here I dare not look upon him. [*Weeps.*

True. O Barnwell! Barnwell!

Barn. Mercy, mercy, gracious Heaven! For death, but not for this, was I prepared.

True. What have I suffered since I saw you last! What pain has absence given me! —But oh! to see thee thus!

Barn. I know it is dreadful! I feel the anguish of thy generous soul—but I was born to murder all who love me. [*Both weep.*

True. I came not to reproach you; I thought to bring you comfort. But I'm deceived, for I have none to give. I came to share thy sorrow, but cannot bear my own.

Barn. My sense of guilt, indeed, you cannot know—'tis what the good and innocent, like you, can ne'er conceive. But other griefs at present I have none but what I feel for you. In your sorrow I read you love me still. But yet methinks 'tis strange, when I consider what I am.

True. No more of that! I can remember nothing but thy virtues, thy honest, tender friendship, our former happy state, and present misery.—Oh, had you trusted me when first the fair seducer tempted you, all might have been prevented.

Barn. Alas, thou know'st not what a wretch I've been! Breach of friendship was my first and least offence. So far was I lost to goodness, so devoted to the author of my ruin, that, had she insisted on my murdering thee, I think I should have done it.

True. Prithee, aggravate thy faults no more!

Barn. I think I should! Thus, good and generous as you are, I should have murdered you!

True. We have not yet embraced, and may be interrupted. Come to my arms!

Barn. Never! never will I taste such joys on earth; never will I so soothe my just remorse! Are those honest arms and faithful bosom fit to embrace and to support a murderer? These iron fetters only shall clasp, and flinty pavement bear me [*Throwing himself on the ground*]—even these too good for such a bloody monster.

True. Shall fortune sever those whom friendship joined? Thy miseries cannot lay thee so low but love will find thee. [*Lies down by him*] Upon this rugged couch then let us lie; for well it suits our most deplorable condition. Here will we offer to stern calamity, this earth the altar, and ourselves the sacrifice! Our mutual groans shall echo to each other through the dreary vault. Our sighs shall number the moments

as they pass, and mingling tears communicate such anguish as words were never made to express.

Barn. Then be it so! Since you propose an intercourse of woe, pour all your griefs into my breast, and in exchange take mine! [*Embracing*] Where's now the anguish that you promised? You've taken mine and make me no return. Sure, peace and comfort dwell within these arms, and sorrow can't approach me while I'm here! This too is the work of Heaven, who, having before spoke peace and pardon to me, now sends thee to confirm it. Oh, take, take some of the joy that overflows my breast!

True. I do, I do. Almighty Power, how have you made us capable to bear, at once, the extremes of pleasure and of pain!

Scene VI

To them the Keeper.

Keeper. Sir!
True. I come. [*Exit Keeper.*

Scene VII

Barnwell *and* Trueman.

Barn. Must you leave me? Death would soon have parted us forever.

True. O my Barnwell, there's yet another task behind; again your heart must bleed for others' woes.

Barn. To meet and part with you, I thought was all I had to do on earth! What is there more for me to do or suffer?

True. I dread to tell thee; yet it must be known!—Maria——

Barn. Our master's fair and virtuous daughter?

True. The same.

Barn. No misfortune, I hope, has reached that lovely maid! Preserve her, Heaven, from every ill, to show mankind that goodness is your care!

True. Thy, thy misfortunes, my unhappy friend, have reached her. Whatever you and I have felt, and more, if more be possible, she feels for you.

Barn. [*aside*]. I know he doth abhor a lie and would not trifle with his dying friend. This is, indeed, the bitterness of death!

True. You must remember, for we all observed it, for some time past a heavy melancholy weighed her down. Disconsolate she seemed, and pined and languished from a cause unknown till, hearing of your dreadful fate, the long stifled flame blazed out. She wept, she wrung her hands, and tore her hair, and in the transport of her grief discovered her own lost state whilst she lamented yours.

Barn. Will all the pain I feel restore thy ease, lovely, unhappy maid? [*Weeping*] Why didn't you let me die and never know it?

True. It was impossible; she makes no secret of her passion for you, and is determined to see you ere you die. She waits for me to introduce her. [*Exit.*

Scene VIII

Barnwell.

Barn. Vain, busy thoughts, be still! What avails it to think on what I might have been? I now am—what I've made myself.

Scene IX

To him Trueman *and* Maria.

True. Madam, reluctant I lead you to this dismal scene. This is the seat of misery and guilt. Here awful justice reserves her public victims. This is the entrance to shameful death.

Mar. To this sad place, then, no improper guest, the abandoned, lost Maria brings despair—and see the subject and the cause of all this world of woe! Silent and motionless he stands, as if his soul had quitted her abode and the lifeless form alone was left behind—yet that so perfect that beauty and death, ever at enmity, now seem united there.

Barn. I groan but murmur not. Just Heaven, I am your own; do with me what you please.

Mar. Why are your streaming eyes still fixed below, as though thou'dst give the greedy earth thy sorrows and rob me of my due? Were happiness within your power, you should bestow it where you pleased; but in your misery I must and will partake!

Barn. Oh! say not so, but fly, abhor, and leave me to my fate! Consider what you are—how vast your fortune, and how bright your fame; have pity on your youth, your beauty, and unequalled virtue, for which so many noble peers have sighed in vain! Bless with your charms some honorable lord! Adorn with your beauty and by your example improve the English court, that justly claims such merit; so shall I quickly be to you as though I had never been.

Mar. When I forget you, I must be so, indeed. Reason, choice, virtue, all forbid it. Let women like Millwood, if there be more such women, smile in prosperity and in adversity forsake! Be it the pride of virtue to repair, or to partake, the ruin such have made.

True. Lovely, ill-fated maid! Was there ever such generous distress before? How must this pierce his grateful heart, and aggravate his woes!

Barn. Ere I knew guilt or shame—when Fortune smiled, and when my youthful hopes were at the highest—if then to have raised my thoughts to you had been presumption in me, never to have been pardoned, think how much beneath yourself you condescend, to regard me now!

Mar. Let her blush who, professing love, invades the freedom of your sex's choice, and meanly sues in hopes of a return! Your inevitable fate hath rendered hope impossible as vain. Then why should I fear to avow a passion so just and so disinterested?

True. If any should take occasion from Millwood's crimes to libel the best and fairest part of the creation, here let them see their error! The most distant hopes of such a tender passion from so bright a maid might add to the happiness of the most happy, and make the greatest proud. Yet here 'tis lavished in vain: though by the rich present, the generous donor is undone, he on whom it is bestowed receives no benefit.

Barn. So the aromatic spices of the East, which all the living covet and esteem, are, with unavailing kindness, wasted on the dead.

Mar. Yes, fruitless is my love, and unavailing all my sighs and tears. Can they save thee from approaching death—from such a death? Oh, terrible idea! What is her misery and distress, who sees the first, last object of her love, for whom alone she'd live—for whom she'd die a thousand, thousand deaths, if it were possible—expiring in her arms? Yet she is happy when compared to me. Were millions of worlds mine, I'd gladly give them in exchange for her condition. The most consummate woe is light to mine. The last of curses to other miserable maids is all I ask, and that's denied me.

True. Time and reflection cure all ills.

Mar. All but this; his dreadful catastrophe, Virtue herself abhors. To give a holiday to suburb slaves, and passing entertain the savage herd who, elbowing each other for a sight, pursue and press upon him like his fate! A mind with piety and resolution armed may smile on death. But public ignominy, everlasting shame,—shame, the death of souls—to die a thousand times, and yet survive even death itself, in never-dying infamy—is this to be endured? Can I, who live in him, and must, each hour of my devoted life, feel all these woes renewed—can I endure this?

True. Grief has impaired her spirits; she pants as in the agonies of death.

Barn. Preserve her, Heaven, and restore her peace; nor let her death be added to my crime! [*Bell tolls*] I am summoned to my fate.

Scene X

To them the Keeper.

Keeper. The officers attend you, sir. Mrs. Millwood is already summoned.

Barn. Tell 'em, I'm ready.—And now, my friend, farewell! [*Embracing*] Support and comfort the best you can this mourning fair.—No more! Forget not to pray for me!—[*Turning to* Maria] Would you, bright excellence, permit me the honor of a chaste embrace, the last happiness this world could give were mine. [*She inclines toward him; they embrace*] Exalted goodness! Oh, turn your eyes from earth, and me, to heaven, where virtue like yours is ever heard. Pray for the peace of my departing soul! Early my race of wickedness began, and soon has reached the summit. Ere nature has finished her work and stamped me man—just at the time that others begin to stray—my course is finished. Though short my span of life, and few my days, yet count my crimes for years, and I have lived whole ages. Justice and mercy are in heaven the same: its utmost severity is mercy to the whole, thereby to cure man's folly and presumption, which else would render even infinite mercy vain and ineffectual. Thus Justice, in compassion to mankind, cuts off a wretch like me, by one such example to secure thousands from future ruin.

If any youth, like you, in future times,
Shall mourn my fate, though he abhor my crimes;
Or tender maid, like you, my tale shall hear,
And to my sorrows give a pitying tear;
To each such melting eye and throbbing heart
Would gracious Heaven this benefit impart—
Never to know my guilt nor feel my pain.
Then must you own, you ought not to complain;
Since you nor weep, nor shall I die, in vain. [*Exeunt.*

Scene XI

The Prison Yard.

Enter Trueman *to* Blunt *and* Lucy.

Lucy. Heart-breaking sight! O wretched, wretched Millwood!

True. You came from her, then; how is she disposed to meet her fate?

Blunt. Who can describe unalterable woe?

Lucy. She goes to death encompassed with horror—loathing life, and yet afraid to die. No tongue can tell her anguish and despair.

True. Heaven be better to her than her

fears! May she prove a warning to others, a monument of mercy in herself!

Lucy. Oh, sorrow insupportable! Break, break, my heart!

True. In vain

With bleeding hearts and weeping eyes we show
A human, gen'rous sense of others' woe,
Unless we mark what drew their ruin on,
And, by avoiding that, prevent our own.

Scene XII

The place of execution. The gallows and ladders at the farther end of the stage. A crowd of spectators.

Blunt *and* Lucy.

Lucy. Heavens! what a throng!

Blunt. How terrible is death when thus prepared!

Lucy. Support them, Heaven! thou only can support them; all other help is vain.

Officer [*within*]. Make way there; make way and give the prisoners room!

Lucy. They are here; observe them well! How humble and composed young Barnwell seems! But Millwood looks wild, ruffled with passion, confounded and amazed.

Enter Barnwell, Millwood, *Officers and Executioners.*

Barn. See, Millwood, see: our journey's at an end. Life, like a tale that's told, is passed away; that short but dark and unknown passage, death, is all the space 'tween us and endless joys, or woes eternal.

Mill. Is this the end of all my flattering hopes? Were youth and beauty given me for a curse, and wisdom only to insure my ruin? They were, they were! Heaven, thou hast done thy worst. Or, if thou hast in store some untried plague—somewhat that's worse than shame, despair and death, unpitied death, confirmed despair and soul confounding shame—something that men and angels can't describe, and only fiends, who bear it, can conceive: now pour it—now, on this devoted head, that I may feel the worst thou canst inflict, and bid defiance to thy utmost power!

Barn. Yet, ere we pass the dreadful gulf of death—yet, ere you're plunged in everlasting woe, oh, bend your stubborn knees and harder heart, humbly to deprecate the wrath divine! Who knows but Heaven, in your dying moments, may bestow that grace and mercy which your life despised!

Mill. Why name you mercy to a wretch like me? Mercy's beyond my hope—almost beyond my wish. I can't repent, nor ask to be forgiven.

Barn. Oh, think what 'tis to be for ever, ever miserable; nor with vain pride oppose a Power that's able to destroy you!

Mill. That will destroy me. I feel it will. A deluge of wrath is pouring on my soul. Chains, darkness, wheels, racks, sharp stinging scorpions, molten lead, and seas of sulphur, are light to what I feel.

Barn. Oh, add not to your vast account despair—a sin more injurious to Heaven than all you've yet committed.

Mill. Oh, I have sinned beyond the reach of mercy!

Barn. Oh, say not so; 'tis blasphemy to think it. As yon bright roof is higher than the earth, so, and much more, does Heaven's goodness pass our apprehension. Oh, what created being shall presume to circumscribe mercy, that knows no bounds?

Mill. This yields no hope. Though mercy may be boundless, yet 'tis free; and I was doomed before the world began, to endless pains, and thou to joys eternal.

Barn. O gracious Heaven! extend thy pity to her! Let thy rich mercy flow in plenteous streams, to chase her fears and heal her wounded soul!

Mill. It will not be. Your prayers are lost in air, or else returned, perhaps with double blessing, to your bosom; but me they help not.

Barn. Yet hear me, Millwood!

Mill. Away, I will not hear thee. I tell thee, youth, I am by Heaven devoted a dreadful instance of its power to punish. [Barnwell *seems to pray*] If thou wilt pray, pray for thyself, not me! How doth his fervent soul mount with his words, and both ascend to heaven—that heaven whose gates are shut with adamantine bars against my prayers, had I the will to pray.—I cannot bear it! Sure, 'tis the worst of torments to behold others enjoy that bliss that we must never taste!

Officer. The utmost limit of your time's expired.

Mill. Encompassed with horror, whither must I go? I would not live—nor die. That I could cease to be, or ne'er had been!

Barn. Since peace and comfort are denied her here, may she find mercy where she least expects it, and this be all her hell!—From our example may all be taught to fly the first approach of vice; but, if o'ertaken

By strong temptation, weakness, or surprise,
Lament their guilt and by repentance rise!
Th'impenitent alone die unforgiven;
To sin's like man, and to forgive like Heaven. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE

WRITTEN BY COLLEY CIBBER, ESQ., AND SPOKEN BY MRS. CIBBER

Since Fate has robbed me of the hopeless youth
For whom my heart had hoarded up its truth,
By all the laws of love and honor, now
I'm free again to choose—and one of you.

But soft—with caution first I'll round me peep;
Maids, in my case, should look before they leap.
Here's choice enough, of various sorts and hue,
The cit, the wit, the rake cocked up in cue,
The fair, spruce mercer, and the tawny Jew.

Suppose I search the sober gallery—No,
There's none but prentices, and cuckolds all a row;
And these, I doubt, are those that make 'em so. [*Pointing to the boxes.*

'Tis very well, enjoy the jest! But you,
Fine, powdered sparks—nay, I'm told 'tis true——
Your happy spouses can make cuckolds too.

'Twixt you and them, the diff'rence this perhaps:
The cit's ashamed whene'er his duck he traps;
But you, when Madam's tripping, let her fall,
Cock up your hats, and take no shame at all.

What if some favored poet I could meet,
Whose love would lay his laurels at my feet?
No; painted passion real love abhors:
His flame would prove the suit of creditors.

Not to detain you, then, with longer pause,
In short, my heart to this conclusion draws:
I yield it to the hand that's loudest in applause.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

Oliver Goldsmith, who "touched nothing that he did not adorn," essayed no dramatic composition until near his fortieth year. His days of ragged roving and garret toil were then so far behind him, "Noll Goldsmith, hack-writer," had so long since given place to the great Dr. Goldsmith, the friend of Johnson, Reynolds, and Burke, and member of the famous "Literary Club," that his early struggles need not long detain us. His birth in the mean hamlet of Pallas in Longford, Ireland, November 10, 1728; his desultory boyhood in his father's poor parish and at many an Irish school; his four unhappy years at Trinity College, Dublin; the season of idle waiting and of aimless wandering that followed, are of little import to the student of his dramas. "He was a plant that flowered late," said Dr. Johnson; "there appeared nothing remarkable about him when he was young."

With the thirties close upon him, came London years of the lean kine, during which he tried his hand at every calling—apothecary's clerk, physician, corrector of the press, usher at Peckham School. His literary career opens ignobly as a publisher's hack, making prefaces to order, grinding out reviews, revamping books with butterfly lives. But before he had reached the "mezzo cammin" of life, he had entered upon the great work which he was destined to do. The admirable prose of *The Bee* and of *The Citizen of the World* was succeeded by the more admirable verse of *The Traveller* in 1764 and of *The Hermit* in 1765. After *The Vicar of Wakefield* of the next year, no one can question Goldsmith's claim to the rank which his genius has won. During the few years that remain to him there are other great achievements, that make us quite forget the hack-work of his *Histories* and of *Animated Nature* (1769-1774). *The Deserted Village* (1770) is as memorable as his dramas. Then night closes about him, and early in April, 1774, his body finds a resting-place under the stones of the Temple.

Goldsmith's supremacy in every field of his various endeavor is so readily acknowledged now and his merits seem so very obvious, that it is hard for us to realize the struggles through which he came into his own.

As doubt and suspense disturbed the essayist, the poet, the novelist, before his works found the light amid loud applause, so long and agonized waiting harrowed the sensitive soul of the dramatist. The history of the first of his two plays is one of a battle not only against entrenched opposition, but against that indifference which is often harder to combat than actual enmity. In *The Good Natured Man*, begun in 1766, Goldsmith set himself resolutely against that "genteel" or "sentimental comedy," which, born of the reaction against the coarseness of the Restoration drama and fostered by the milk of human kindness in Richardson's novels, had now attained its full development on both sides of the Channel. Of the *comédie larmoyante* Goldsmith wrote thus in a paper contributed by him to the *Westminster Magazine* (December, 1772): "A new species of dramatic composition has been introduced, under the name of *sentimental* comedy, in which the virtues of private life are exhibited, rather than the vices exposed; and the distresses rather than the faults of mankind make our interest in the piece. These comedies have had of late great success, perhaps from their novelty, and also from their flattering every man in his favorite foible. In these plays almost all the characters are good, and exceedingly generous; they are lavish enough of their *tin* money on the stage; and though they want humor, have abundance of sentiment and feeling. If they happen to have faults or foibles, the spectator is taught, not only to pardon, but to applaud them, in consideration of the goodness of their hearts; so that folly, instead of being ridiculed, is commended, and the comedy aims at touching our passions without the power of being truly pathetic."

The status of sentimental comedy was now greatly strengthened by the vogue of a namby-pamby specimen of the genre, Hugh Kelly's *False Delicacy*, the success of which at Drury Lane early in 1768 was hardly a happy augury for the reception of Goldsmith's comedy at Covent Garden a week later. There was much else to discourage the new dramatist. Garrick, the Drury Lane actor-manager, had kept him long waiting in fuming impatience, and then Colman of Covent Garden, into whose hands the play passed, had held the dejected author off for six months more. Despite a dispirited manager and an unequal cast, *The Good Natured Man* won mild favor; but cries of "Low!" "Low!" greeted the natural humor of its bailiff scene. When Goldsmith contrasted the half-success of his laughable exposure of follies with the tremendous triumph of spurious sensibility, he had every reason to complain that "humor seems to be departing from the stage."

Sentimental comedy, undisturbed, ran its lachrymose course for five years more, before Goldsmith struck another blow—this time with a stronger weapon. His second comedy, afterwards called *She Stoops to Conquer*, was finished, we are told, by the end of 1771, but it languished for over a year in Colman's hands before preparations were made for its presentation. Indeed, this timid manager was "prevailed on at last by much solicitation, nay a kind of force to bring it on" (Johnson). If Goldsmith drew a favor-

able omen from the success of Foote's burlesque of genteel comedy, *The Handsome Housemaid or Piety in Pattens* in the Haymarket in 1773, his hopes must have been dashed by the continued despondency of Colman and by the apathy of the first cast of actors, many of whom threw up their parts after several dull rehearsals. The failure of the play was deemed so certain that it was announced even in the box-office; and Goldsmith himself frankly admitted to Newbery, the purchaser of the copyright, his own large doubts of its success. These doubts grew as the time of the presentation approached; and the tavern dinner, at which Goldsmith's friends gathered on the fateful Ides of March, the day of the performance, must have been an occasion of torture to the apprehensive author, who could "hardly speak a word, but was so choked that he could not swallow a mouthful." After the dinner, his nervous fears so mastered him, that he dared not accompany his friends to the playhouse, but spent his time, during the early scenes of the play, drearily pacing the Mall of St. James' Park. When he was persuaded by a friend who found him there to repair to the theatre, his ears were greeted by "a solitary hiss at the improbability of Mrs. Hardcastle, in her own garden, supposing herself forty miles off on Crackskull Common." At the sight of his alarm Colman won his undying hatred by this mean jest: "Psha! Doctor, don't be afraid of a squib, when we have been sitting these two hours on a barrel of gunpowder." This managerial comment was as untrue as it was unkind, for the enthusiastic reception of the play seems to have been assured from the rise of the curtain. "It was received throughout with the greatest acclamations," says an eye-witness. And that writer of sentimental comedy, Cumberland, assuredly a none too kindly witness, adds: "All eyes were upon Johnson, who sat in a front row in a side box; and when he laughed, everybody thought himself warranted to roar." Even Horace Walpole, who found in the new comedy much to condemn, admitted that it had "succeeded prodigiously."

This success was as permanent as it was immediate. *She Stoops to Conquer* ran its merry course this season of 1773 (the tenth performance being given by royal command), was acted in the summer by Foote at the Haymarket, and was resumed the next winter at Covent Garden. The actors, particularly Lewes as Young Marlow and Quick as Tony Lumpkin, were made men. Five editions of the play appeared within the year. And the gains of the improvident author seem to have been large. From that day to this the comedy's hold on the stage, public or private, has never weakened. In Forster's phrase, "It still continues to add its yearly sum to the harmless stock of public pleasure." Moreover, a blow was dealt to "sentimental comedy," from which it never recovered, being finally done to death by *The School for Scandal* four years later in 1777,—with the same actors in the chief rôles.

Yet the patrons of the sentimental did not yield without a struggle. The criticism of the elegant Horace Walpole, pompous and pretentious

though it may seem to us now, is valuable in illustrating a point of view that has in it certain elements of reason: "Dr. Goldsmith has written a comedy—no, it is the lowest of all farces; it is not the subject I condemn, though very vulgar, but the execution. The drift tends to no moral, no edification of any kind—the situations, however, are well imagined and make one laugh in spite of the grossness of the dialogue, the forced witticisms, and total improbability of the whole plan and conduct. But what disgusts me most is that, though the characters are very low and aim at low humor, not one of them says a sentence that is natural or marks any character at all." This attack resolves itself into four substantial charges: that the play is "low"; that it has no higher purpose than to arouse laughter; that the motif and incidents are improbable; and finally, that the characterization is inadequate. Each and all of these are summarized in the accusation that *She Stoops to Conquer* is not a comedy at all but sheer farce. Let us now weigh each clause in this sweeping indictment.

The charge that Goldsmith is "low" means little more than that he turned to other and older standards of drama than those of the prevailing comedy of sensibility. "When I undertook to write a comedy," he declares in his preface to *The Good Natured Man*, "I confess I was strongly prepossessed in favor of the poets of the last age and strove to imitate them. The term, 'genteel comedy,' was then unknown among us and little more was desired by an audience than nature and humor in whatever walks of life they are most conspicuous." In this return to fresh and natural humor his chief guide seems to have been George Farquhar. As Austin Dobson points out, he was reported by rumor to have played the part of Scrub in his wandering youth and he certainly assigned the rôle of Sir Harry Wildair to the shabby hero of *The Adventures of a Strolling Player*. In *She Stoops to Conquer* there are several reminiscences of *The Beaux' Stratagem:* Miss Hardcastle compares herself, in her maid's disguise, to Cherry; Marlow's desire to see the embroidery (III, 1) recalls Archer's speech to Mrs. Sullen; and in Sullen, as we shall see later, Tony Lumpkin finds a partial prototype. As the term, "low," had been fastened upon Farquhar by Pope and upon Fielding by Richardson, it seems, as applied to Goldsmith, to carry the distinction of a brevet. And yet it rankled, as his many references show. In his *Present State of Polite Learning* he anticipates by fifteen years Walpole's criticism: "By the power of one single monosyllable, our critics have almost got the victory over humor amongst us. Does the poet paint the absurdities of the vulgar, then he is low; does he exaggerate the features of folly, to render it more thoroughly ridiculous, he is then very low." And the seedy tavern companions at *The Three Jolly Pigeons* (I, 2) cry out with unconscious irony against all that is "low."

To the second charge that *She Stoops to Conquer* seems designed merely to excite laughter, Goldsmith himself would have promptly pleaded guilty. "That is all I require," he said to a friend who declared that "he had

laughed exceedingly" on the opening night. And Johnson, too, proclaimed laughter to be the proper criterion of success in the lighter drama, when he said of this very play, "I know of no comedy for years that has so much exhilarated an audience or answered so much the great end of comedy in making an audience merry." And there is no doubt that this laughter is perennial. Criticism may declare the first scene dramatically ineffective and regard the second—that of the alehouse—as sharply and clumsily divided into two halves; but after Tony Lumpkin's impish misdirection of the travellers has once released the flood of mirth, it sweeps through one delightful situation after another, bearing away with it on a high tide of frolic all critical doubts of reader or play-goer. Nor is this humorous satisfaction the idle and unmeaning laughter awakened by empty farce, as Walpole would imply. It finds full warrant in the brisk and gay dialogues, the generous use of dramatic irony, the new and joyous turn given the time-worn formula of mistaken identity, and in the skill with which anticipation is aroused and then abundantly gratified. The motive force of the merry intrigue never seems inadequate.

Nor need we enter into any grave rebuttal of the charge that "all things befall preposterously." It is small defence of the probability of *The Mistakes of a Night* (Goldsmith's subtitle) to point to that delicious misadventure of the seventeen-year old Goldsmith, who was cleverly misled by a waggish fencing-master into taking his ease at the home of a great Irish squire and was not undeceived until after breakfast on the morrow, when "he was looking at his only guinea with pathetic aspect of farewell." Nor is it enough to remind the reader that Tony's practical joke upon his mother was actually perpetrated by Sheridan at the expense of Madame de Genlis. That these incidents actually happened makes them seem not a whit less incredible. Equally beyond belief is Marlow's failure even to glance at Miss Hardcastle during their first interview. All this, as Johnson says, "borders upon farce." In that pleasant borderland of infinite possibilities excellent preparation for the incidents, clever handling of the plot, and naturalness of characters may impart, however, a momentary convincingness to the most riotous extravagances and absurdities. Of such realistic treatment Goldsmith is a master.

She Stoops to Conquer is obviously a comedy of situation rather than of character; but few will now agree with Walpole that its persons are unnatural or merely farcical. The elder Hardcastles are, in their origin, conventional stage figures, but they are so delightfully realized for us that the irascibility of the man and the doting fondness of the woman for her impish son attain to the level of "comic dignity." Kate Hardcastle plays her barmaid rôle with an unforced sprightliness that recalls her model in *The Beaux' Stratagem*. Hastings, typical fine fellow, and that lively lass, Constantia Neville, are more truly figures of comedy than the Faulkland and Julia of Sheridan's *Rivals*. As has often been pointed out, Marlow's natural timidity is

as truly revealed in his excess of impudence as in his excess of bashfulness; and "the high comic intention of the character is never lost in the merely comic situation" (Forster). The crowning glory of the play is of course that impish sprite, Tony Lumpkin. Whatever he may owe to the clownish heir of Steele's comedy, *The Tender Husband,* Humphry Gubbin, whose relation to an income of £1500 closely resembles his own, he seems rather a composite of the more familiar figures of clown and puck, of Farquhar's Sullen and Shakspere's Robin Goodfellow. He exhibits all the young squire's awkwardness, sheepishness, loutish ignorance, love of low company, and pride of purse; he shares the village elf's buoyancy of spirit, irresponsibility, cunning, and delight in mischief that never degenerates into malice. He indeed is of the essence of farce, for such a demon of fun needs no motive for his rogueries.

It is best to leave *She Stoops to Conquer* in that mirthful "debatable land" of farce-comedy with such worthy fellows as *The Taming of the Shrew, The Merry Wives of Windsor,* and *The Rivals.*

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

OR

THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT

TO SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

Dear Sir,—By inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honor to inform the public, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety.

I have, particularly, reason to thank you for your partiality to this performance. The undertaking a comedy, not merely sentimental, was very dangerous; and Mr. Colman, who saw this piece in its various stages, always thought it so. However, I ventured to trust it to the public; and, though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful.—I am, dear Sir, your most sincere friend and admirer,

Oliver Goldsmith.

PROLOGUE

By DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

Enter Mr. Woodward, dressed in black, and holding a Handkerchief to his Eyes.

Excuse me, sirs, I pray—I can't yet speak—
I'm crying now—and have been all the week!
'Tis not alone this mourning suit, good masters;
I've that within—for which there are no plasters!
Pray would you know the reason why I'm crying?
The Comic muse, long sick, is now a-dying!
And if she goes, my tears will never stop;
For as a player, I can't squeeze out one drop:
I am undone, that's all—shall lose my bread—
I'd rather, but that's nothing—lose my head.
When the sweet maid is laid upon the bier,
Shuter and *I* shall be chief mourners here.
To *her* a mawkish drab of spurious breed,
Who deals in *sentimentals* will succeed!
Poor *Ned* and *I* are dead to all intents,
We can as soon speak *Greek* as *sentiments!*
Both nervous grown, to keep our spirits up,
We now and then take down a hearty cup.
What shall we do?—If Comedy forsake us!
They'll turn us out, and no one else will take us,
But why can't I be moral?—Let me try—
My heart thus pressing—fixed my face and eye—
With a sententious look, that nothing means
(Faces are blocks, in sentimental scenes),
Thus I begin—*All is not gold that glitters,*
Pleasure seems sweet, but proves a glass of bitters.
When ignorance enters, folly is at hand;
Learning is better far than house and land.
Let not your virtue trip, who trips may stumble,
And virtue is not virtue, if she tumble.
I give it up—morals won't do for me;
To make you laugh I must play tragedy.
One hope remains—hearing the maid was ill,
A *doctor* comes this night to show his skill.
To cheer her heart, and give your muscles motion,
He in *five draughts* prepared, presents a potion:
A kind of magic charm—for be assured,
If you will *swallow* it, the maid is cured.

But desperate the Doctor, and her case is,
If you reject the dose, and make wry faces!
This truth he boasts, will boast it while he lives,
No *poisonous drugs* are mixed in what he gives;
Should he succeed, you'll give him his degree;
If not, within he will receive no fee!
The college *you,* must his pretentions back,
Pronounce him *regular,* or dub him *quack.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

Sir Charles Marlow.
Young Marlow (His Son).
Hardcastle.
Hastings.
Tony Lumpkin.
Diggory.

WOMEN

Mrs. Hardcastle.
Miss Hardcastle.
Miss Neville.
Maid.
Landlords, Servants, &c., &c.

ACT I

Scene I

A Chamber in an Old-Fashioned House.

Enter Mrs. Hardcastle *and* Mr. Hardcastle.

Mrs. Hard. I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbor, Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hard. Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs. Hard. Ay, *your* times were fine times, indeed; you have been telling us of *them* for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master: and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hard. And I love it. I love everything that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and, I believe, Dorothy [*taking her hand*], you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs. Hard. Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothy's and your old wife's. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

Hard. Let me see; twenty added to twenty, makes just fifty and seven!

Mrs. Hard. It's false, Mr. Hardcastle: I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught *him* finely!

Mrs. Hard. No matter, Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

Hard. Learning, quotha! A mere composition of tricks and mischief!

Mrs. Hard. Humor, my dear: nothing but humor. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humor.

Hard. I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond! If burning the footmen's shoes, frighting the maids, and worrying the kittens, be humor, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popped my bald head in Mrs. Frizzle's face!

Mrs. Hard. And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any

good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

Hard. Latin for him! A cat and fiddle! No, no, the ale-house and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to!

Mrs. Hard. Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we shan't have him long among us. Anybody that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

Hard. Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs. Hard. He coughs sometimes.

Hard. Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs. Hard. I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

Hard. And truly, so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking-trumpet—[TONY *hallooing behind the scenes*]—O, there he goes—A very consumptive figure, truly!

Enter TONY, *crossing the stage.*

Mrs. Hard. Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovey?

Tony. I'm in haste, mother, I cannot stay.

Mrs. Hard. You shan't venture out this raw evening, my dear: you look most shockingly.

Tony. I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

Hard. Ay; the ale-house, the old place: I thought so.

Mrs. Hard. A low, paltry set of fellows.

Tony. Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse doctor, Little Aminadab that grinds the music box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

Mrs. Hard. Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night, at least.

Tony. As for disappointing *them,* I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint *myself!*

Mrs. Hard. [*Detaining him*]. You shan't go.

Tony. I will, I tell you.

Mrs. Hard. I say you shan't.

Tony. We'll see which is strongest, you or I. [*Exit hauling her out.*

HARDCASTLE *solus.*

Hard. Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling, Kate; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze and French frippery as the best of them.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Blessings on my pretty innocence! Dressed out as usual, my Kate! Goodness! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss Hard. You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress, to please you.

Hard. Well, remember, I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by-the-bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hard. Then, to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

Miss Hard. Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I shan't like him; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

Hard. Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

Miss Hard. Is he?

Hard. Very generous.

Miss Hard. I believe I shall like him.

Hard. Young and brave.

Miss Hard. I am sure I shall like him.

Hard. And very handsome.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, say no more [*kissing his hand*], he's mine, I'll have him!

Hard. And, to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

Miss Hard. Eh! you have frozen me to death again. That word *reserved* has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

Hard. On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

Miss Hard. He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so

everything, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

Hard. Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It is more than an even wager, he may not have *you*.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, why will you mortify one so?—Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery. Set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

Hard. Bravely resolved! In the meantime I'll go prepare the servants for his reception; as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. [*Exit.*

MISS HARDCASTLE *sola.*

Miss Hard. Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome; these he put last; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But then reserved, and sheepish, that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes, and can't I—but I vow I'm disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover!

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Hard. I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there anything whimsical about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

Miss Neville. Perfectly, my dear. Yet, now I look again—bless me!—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds or the goldfishes? Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or has the last novel been too moving?

Miss Hard. No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover!

Miss Neville. And his name——

Miss Hard. Is Marlow.

Miss Neville. Indeed!

Miss Hard. The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss Neville. As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, *my* admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss Hard. Never.

Miss Neville. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue, he is the modestest man alive; but his acquaintance give him a very different character among creatures of another stamp: you understand me?

Miss Hard. An odd character, indeed! I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

Miss Neville. I have just come from one of our agreeable *tête-à-têtes*. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss Hard. And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss Neville. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But, at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss Hard. My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss Neville. It is a good-natured creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. *Allons.* Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss Hard. Would it were bed-time and all were well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

AN ALE-HOUSE ROOM.

Several shabby fellows, with punch and tobacco. TONY *at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest: a mallet in his hand.*

Omnes. Hurrea, hurrea, hurrea, bravo!

First Fellow. Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The 'Squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

Omnes. Ay, a song, a song.

Tony. Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this ale-house, the Three Pigeons.

SONG.

Let school-masters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives *genus* a better discerning,
Let them brag of their Heathenish Gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians;
Their Quis, and their Quæs, and their Quods,
They're all but a parcel of pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll!

When Methodist preachers come down,
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,

I'll wager the rascals a crown,
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,
But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll!

Then come, put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons;
But of all the birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll!

Omnes. Bravo, bravo!

First Fellow. The 'Squire has got spunk in him.

Second Fellow. I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's *low*.

Third Fellow. O damn anything that's *low*, I cannot bear it!

Fourth Fellow. The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time. If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

Third Fellow. I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What, though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes. Water Parted, or the minuet in Ariadne.

Second Fellow. What a pity it is the 'Squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him.

Tony. Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

Second Fellow. O, he takes after his own father for that. To be sure, old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls in the whole county.

Tony. Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's grey mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter LANDLORD.

Landlord. There be two gentlemen in a postchaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest; and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle.

Tony. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners?

Landlord. I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

Tony. Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. [*Exit* LANDLORD.] Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt Mob.*

TONY *solus.*

Tony. Father-in-law has been calling me whelp and hound, this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of *that* if he can!

Enter LANDLORD, *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

Marlow. What a tedious uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore!

Hastings. And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us enquire more frequently on the way.

Marlow. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

Hastings. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

Tony. No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been enquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

Hastings. Not in the least, sir, but should thank you for information.

Tony. Nor the way you came?

Hastings. No, sir, but if you can inform us——

Tony. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that—you have lost your way.

Marlow. We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

Tony. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

Marlow. That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

Tony. No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained,

old-fashioned, whimsical fellow with an ugly face, a daughter, and a pretty son?

Hastings. We have not seen the gentleman, but he has the family you mention.

Tony. The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole——The son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of!

Marlow. Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

Tony. He-he-hem—then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hastings. Unfortunate!

Tony. It's a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's. [*Winking upon the* LANDLORD.] Mr. Hardcastle's of Quagmire Marsh, you understand me.

Landlord. Master Hardcastle's! Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash Lane.

Marlow. Cross down Squash Lane!

Landlord. Then you were to keep straight forward, until you came to four roads.

Marlow. Come to where four roads meet!

Tony. Ay, but you must be sure to take only one of them.

Marlow. O, sir, you're facetious!

Tony. Then, keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crack-skull Common: there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward, till you come to Farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill——

Marlow. Zounds, man! we could as soon find out the longitude!

Hastings. What's to be done, Marlow?

Marlow. This house promises but a poor reception, though, perhaps, the landlord can accommodate us.

Landlord. Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

Tony. And to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. [*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.*] I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fire-side, with——three chairs and a bolster?

Hastings. I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

Marlow. And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

Tony. You do, do you?—then let me see—what—if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head; the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole county?

Hastings. O ho! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

Landlord [*apart to* TONY]. Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

Tony. Mum, you fool, you. Let *them* find that out. [*To them.*] You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the roadside. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

Hastings. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way?

Tony. No, no: but I tell you though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he! he! he! He'll be for giving you his company, and, ecod, if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace!

Landlord. A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but 'a keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

Marlow. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connection. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

Tony. No, no; straight forward. I'll just step myself, and show you a piece of the way. [*To the* LANDLORD.] Mum.

Landlord. Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant—damned mischievous son of a whore. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I

AN OLD-FASHIONED HOUSE.

Enter HARDCASTLE, *followed by three or four awkward Servants.*

Hardcastle. Well, I hope you're perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

Omnes. Ay, ay.

Hard. When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frighted rabbits in a warren.

Omnes. No, no.

Hard. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind *my* chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead, you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Diggory. Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way, when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill——

Hard. You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

Diggory. By the laws, your worship, that's parfectly unpossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

Hard. Blockhead! Is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlor? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Diggory. Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hard. Diggory, you are too talkative. Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Diggory. Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gunroom: I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he!—for the soul of me! We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha! ha! ha!

Hard. Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please [*to* DIGGORY]—Eh, why don't you move?

Diggory. Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

Hard. What, will nobody move?

First Servant. I'm not to leave this pleace.

Second Servant. I'm sure it's no pleace of mine.

Third Servant. Nor mine, for sartain.

Diggory. Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

Hard. You numskulls! and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. O, you dunces! I find I must begin all over again.—But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads! I'll go in the meantime and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate.

[*Exit* HARDCASTLE.

Diggory. By the elevens, my pleace is gone quite out of my head.

Roger. I know that my pleace is to be everywhere!

First Servant. Where the devil is mine?

Second Servant. My pleace is to be nowhere at all; and so I'ze go about my business!

[*Exeunt Servants, running about as if frighted, different ways.*

Enter Servant with candles, showing in MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

Servant. Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome. This way.

Hastings. After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house; antique but creditable.

Marlow. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good housekeeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

Hastings. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly.

Marlow. Travellers, George, must pay in all places. The only difference is, that in good inns, you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns, you are fleeced and starved.

Hastings. You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised, that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

Marlow. The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college, or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother—But among females of another class, you know——

Hastings. Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience!

Marlow. They are of *us*, you know.

Hastings. But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

Marlow. Why, man, that's because I *do* want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

Hastings. If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you

lavish upon the barmaid of an inn, or even a college bedmaker——

Marlow. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them. They freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle. But to me, a modest woman, dressed out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

Hastings. Ha! ha! ha! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry!

Marlow. Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad staring question of, *madam, will you marry me?* No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you!

Hastings. I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

Marlow. As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low. Answer yes, or no, to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face, till I see my father's again.

Hastings. I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

Marlow. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you, the family don't know you, as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honor do the rest.

Hastings. My dear Marlow! But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent, and her own inclination.

Marlow. Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward unprepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's apprentice, or one of the duchesses of Drury Lane. Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us.

Enter Hardcastle.

Hard. Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

Marlow [*aside*]. He has got our names from the servants already. [*To him.*] We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. [*To* Hastings.] I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning. I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

Hard. I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

Hastings. I fancy, George, you're right: the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.

Hard. Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no constraint in this house. This is Liberty Hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

Marlow. Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

Hard. Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when we went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison——

Marlow. Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown?

Hard. He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

Hastings. I think not: brown and yellow mix but very poorly.

Hard. I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

Marlow. The girls like finery.

Hard. Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. "Now," says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him—you must have heard of George Brooks; "I'll pawn my dukedom," says he, "but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood!" So——

Marlow. What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the meantime, it would help us to carry on the siege with vigor.

Hard. Punch, sir!—[*Aside.*] This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with!

Marlow. Yes, sir, punch! A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty Hall, you know.

Hard. Here's cup, sir.

Marlow [*aside*]. So this fellow, in his Liberty Hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

Hard. [*Taking the cup*]. I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my

own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is our better acquaintance!

[*Drinks.*

Marlow [*aside*]. A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humor him a little. Sir, my service to you.

[*Drinks.*

Hastings [*aside*]. I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

Marlow. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose?

Hard. No, sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there's no business *for us that sell ale.*

Hastings. So, then you have no turn for politics, I find.

Hard. Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but, finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about *Heyder Ally,* or *Ally Cawn,* than about *Ally Croaker.* Sir, my service to you.

Hastings. So that, with eating above stairs, and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good pleasant bustling life of it.

Hard. I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlor.

Marlow [*After drinking*]. And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster Hall.

Hard. Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

Marlow [*aside*]. Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

Hastings. So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher.

[*Drinks.*

Hard. Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

Marlow. Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I believe it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

Hard. For supper, sir!——[*Aside.*] Was ever such a request to a man in his own house!

Marlow. Yes, sir, supper, sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

Hard. [*aside*]. Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. [*To him.*] Why, really, sir, as for supper I can't well tell. My Dorothy, and the cook maid, settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

Marlow. You do, do you?

Hard. Entirely. By-the-bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

Marlow. Then I beg they'll admit *me* as one of their privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel, I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir.

Hard. O, no, sir, none in the least; yet, I don't know how: our Bridget, the cook maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

Hastings. Let's see your list of the larder, then. I ask it as a favor. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

Marlow [*To* Hardcastle, *who looks at them with surprise*]. Sir, he's very right, and it's my way, too.

Hard. Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper. I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

Hastings [*aside*]. All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel! We shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

Marlow [*Perusing*]. What's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the dessert. The devil, sir, do you think we have brought down the whole Joiners' Company, or the Corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

Hastings. But let's hear it.

Marlow [*Reading*]. For the first course at the top, a pig, and pruin sauce.

Hastings. Damn your pig, I say!

Marlow. And damn your pruin sauce, say I!

Hard. And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig, with pruin sauce, is very good eating.

Marlow. At the bottom, a calf's tongue and brains.

Hastings. Let your brains be knocked out, my good sir; I don't like them.

Marlow. Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves, I do.

Hard. [*aside*]. Their impudence confounds me. [*To them.*] Gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

Marlow. Item. A pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream!

Hastings. Confound your made dishes, I shall be as much at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

Hard. I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like, but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to——

Marlow. Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

Hard. I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

Marlow. Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

Hard. I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

Marlow. You see I'm resolved on it.—[*Aside.*] A very troublesome fellow this, as ever I met with.

Hard. Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you.—[*Aside.*] This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence.

[*Exeunt* MARLOW *and* HARDCASTLE.

HASTINGS *solus.*

Hastings. So I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him? Ha! what do I see! Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

Miss Neville. My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune? to what accident am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

Hastings. Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

Miss Neville. An inn! sure you mistake! my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

Hastings. My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow whom we accidentally met at a house hard by directed us thither.

Miss Neville. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often, ha! ha! ha! ha!

Hastings. He whom your aunt intends for you? He of whom I have such just apprehensions?

Miss Neville. You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

Hastings. Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey, but they'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected.

Miss Neville. I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India Director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

Hastings. Perish the baubles! Your person is all I desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss Neville. But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we still continue to deceive him?—This, this way—— [*They confer.*

Enter MARLOW.

Marlow. The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself, but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us, too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family.—What have we got here?—

Hastings. My dear Charles! Let me congratulate you—The most fortunate accident! —Who do you think is just alighted?

Marlow. Cannot guess.

Hastings. Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighborhood, they called, on their return to take fresh horses, here. Miss Hardcastle has just stept into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky? eh!

Marlow [*aside*]. I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment.

Hastings. Well! but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

Marlow. Oh! yes. Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter——But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder——What if we should postpone the happiness till to-morrow?——To-morrow at her own house——It will be every bit as convenient——And rather more respectful——To-morrow let it be. [*Offering to go.*

Miss Neville. By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the ardor of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

Marlow. O! the devil! how shall I support it? Hem! hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem!

Hastings. Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know.

Marlow. And of all women, she that I dread most to encounter!

Enter Miss Hardcastle, *as returned from walking, a bonnet, &c.*

Hastings [*Introducing them*]. Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow, I'm proud of bringing two persons of such merit together, that only want to know, to esteem each other.

Miss Hard. [*aside*]. Now, for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. [*After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted.*] I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir——I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Marlow. Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry—madam—or rather glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hastings [*To him*]. You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

Miss Hard. I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have seen so much of the finest company can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Marlow [*Gathering courage*]. I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

Miss Neville. But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

Hastings [*To him*]. Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance for ever.

Marlow [*To him*]. Hem! Stand by me, then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two to set me up again.

Miss Hard. An observer, like you, upon life, were, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Marlow. Pardon me, madam. I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

Hastings [*To him*]. Bravo, bravo. Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Marlow. Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things. [*To him.*] Zounds! George, sure you won't go? How can you leave us?

Hastings. Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. [*To him.*] You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *tête-à-tête* of our own. [*Exeunt.*

Miss Hard. [*After a pause*]. But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, sir. The ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

Marlow [*Relapsing into timidity*]. Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

Miss Hard. And that some say is the very worst way to obtain them.

Marlow. Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex.——But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss Hard. Not at all, sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself: I could hear it for ever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of *sentiment* could ever admire those light airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

Marlowe. It's—a disease—of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish for—um-a-um.

Miss Hard. I understand you, sir. There must be some, who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Marlow. My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing—a——

Miss Hard. [*aside*]. Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon some occasions. [*To him.*] You were going to observe, sir——

Marlow. I was observing, madam——I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss Hard. [*aside*]. I vow and so do I. [*To him.*] You were observing, sir, that in this

age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, sir.

Marlow. Yes, madam. In this age of hypocrisy, there are few who upon strict enquiry do not—a—a—a——

Miss Hard. I understand you perfectly, sir.

Marlow [*aside*]. Egad! and that's more than I do myself!

Miss Hard. You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

Marlow. True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

Miss Hard. Not in the least, sir; there's something so agreeable and spirited in your manner, such life and force——pray, sir, go on.

Marlow. Yes, madam. I was saying——that there are some occasions——when a total want of courage, madam, destroys all the ——and puts us——upon a——a——a——

Miss Hard. I agree with you entirely, a want of courage upon some occasions assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel. I beg you'll proceed.

Marlow. Yes, madam. Morally speaking, madam——But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray go on.

Marlow. Yes, madam. I was——But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honor to attend you?

Miss Hard. Well then, I'll follow.

Marlow [*aside*]. This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me. [*Exit.*

Miss Hardcastle *sola.*

Miss Hard. Ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well, too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—that, faith, is a question I can scarce answer. [*Exit.*

Enter Tony *and* Miss Neville, *followed by* Mrs. Hardcastle *and* Hastings.

Tony. What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

Miss Neville. I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

Tony. Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do, so I beg you'll keep your distance, I want no nearer relationship.

[*She follows coquetting him to the back scene.*

Mrs. Hard. Well! I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

Hastings. Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's or Tower Wharf.

Mrs. Hard. O! sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighboring rustics; but who can have a manner, that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every *tête-à-tête* from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked Lane. Pray how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings?

Hastings. Extremely elegant and *dégagée*, upon my word, madam. Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose?

Mrs. Hard. I protest, I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum-book for the last year.

Hastings. Indeed. Such a head in a side-box, at the Play-house, would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a City Ball.

Mrs. Hard. I vow, since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman; so one must dress a little particular or one may escape in the crowd.

Hastings. But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress! [*Bowing.*]

Mrs. Hard. Yet, what signifies *my* dressing when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hardcastle: all I can say will never argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over like my Lord Pately, with powder.

Hastings. You are right, madam; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

Mrs. Hard. But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual Gothic vivacity, he said I only wanted him to throw off his wig to convert it into a *tête* for my own wearing!

Hastings. Intolerable! At your age you

may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs. Hard. Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

Hastings. Some time ago forty was all the mode; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs. Hard. Seriously. Then I shall be too young for the fashion!

Hastings. No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, as a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs. Hard. And yet Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels as the oldest of us all.

Hastings. Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman, a brother of yours, I should presume?

Mrs. Hard. My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. [*To them.*] Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance, this evening?

Tony. I have been saying no soft things; but that it's very hard to be followed about so! Ecod! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself but the stable.

Mrs. Hard. Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

Miss Neville. There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

Tony. That's a damned confounded—crack.

Mrs. Hard. Ah! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings? The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a size, too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

Tony. You had as good not make me, I tell you. [*Measuring.*

Miss Neville. O lud! he has almost cracked my head.

Mrs. Hard. O, the monster! For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so!

Tony. If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard. Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? I that have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel? Did not I prescribe for you every day, and weep while the receipt was operating?

Tony. Ecod! you had reason to weep, for you have been dosing me ever since I was born. I have gone through every receipt in the complete housewife ten times over; and you have thoughts of coursing me through *Quincy* next spring. But, ecod! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard. Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

Tony. I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs. Hard. That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the ale-house or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable, wild notes, unfeeling monster!

Tony. Ecod! Mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs. Hard. Was ever the like? But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

Hastings. Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

Mrs. Hard. Well! I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation. Was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy?

[*Exeunt* Mrs. Hardcastle *and* Miss Neville.

Hastings. Tony.

Tony [*singing*]. *There was a young man riding by, and fain would have his will. Rang do didlo dee.* Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said, they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

Hastings. Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

Tony. That's as I find 'um.

Hastings. Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer! And yet she appears to me a pretty, well-tempered girl.

Tony. That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter cantankerous toad in all Christendom!

Hastings [*aside*]. Pretty encouragement, this, for a lover!

Tony. I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

Hastings. To me she appears sensible and silent!

Tony. Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

Hastings. But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

Tony. Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in a ditch.

Hastings. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty.—Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

Tony. Bandbox! She's all a made up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod, she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

Hastings. Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

Tony. Anon.

Hastings. Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

Tony. Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take *her?*

Hastings. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

Tony. Assist you! Ecod, I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and maybe get you a part of her fortin besides, in jewels, that you little dream of.

Hastings. My dear 'Squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

Tony. Come along then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. [*Singing.*

We are the boys
That fears no noise
Where the thundering cannons roar.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

[SCENE I.—THE HOUSE.]

Enter HARDCASTLE *solus.*

Hard. What could my old friend Sir Charles mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlor, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter.—She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, *plainly dressed.*

Hard. Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress as I bid you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

Miss Hard. I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

Hard. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my *modest* gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss Hard. You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description!

Hard. I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

Miss Hard. I never saw anything like it! And a man of the world, too!

Hard. Ay, he learned it all abroad,—what a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

Miss Hard. It seems all natural to him.

Hard. A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master.

Miss Hard. Sure, you mistake, papa! a French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look,—that awkward address,—that bashful manner——

Hard. Whose look? whose manner, child?

Miss Hard. Mr. Marlow's: his *mauvaise honte,* his timidity struck me at the first sight.

Hard. Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses!

Miss Hard. Sure, sir, you rally! I never saw anyone so modest.

Hard. And can you be serious! I never saw such a bouncing swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss Hard. Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

Hard. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

Miss Hard. He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; then left the room with a bow, and, "madam, I would not for the world detain you."

Hard. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before. Asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer. Interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun, and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch!

Miss Hard. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hard. If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

Miss Hard. And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

Hard. In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss Hard. Yes. But upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man—Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse race in the country.

Hard. If we should find him so.—But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss Hard. And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

Hard. Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense won't end with a sneer at my understanding?

Hard. Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.

Miss Hard. And as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

Hard. Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

Miss Hard. And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TONY, *running in with a casket.*

Tony. Ecod! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother shan't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither. O! my genus, is that you?

Enter HASTINGS.

Hastings. My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last? Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

Tony. And here's something to bear your charges by the way. [*Giving the casket.*] Your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them!

Hastings. But how have you procured them from your mother?

Tony. Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the ale-house so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

Hastings. Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you; Miss Neville is endeavoring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

Tony. Well, keep them, till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough, she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head!

Hastings. But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

Tony. Never you mind her resentment, leave *me* to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are! Morrice, Prance!

[*Exit* HASTINGS.

TONY, MRS. HARDCASTLE, MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. Hard. Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels? It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

Miss Neville. But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

Mrs. Hard. Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my lady Kill-daylight, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back?

Miss Neville. But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

Mrs. Hard. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see, if with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear, does your cousin Con want any jewels, in your eyes, to set off her beauty?

Tony. That's as thereafter may be.

Miss Neville. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

Mrs. Hard. A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table-cut things. They would make you look like the court of king Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

Tony [*apart to* MRS. HARD.]. Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them. Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard. [*apart to* TONY]. You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

Tony. Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

Miss Neville. I desire them but for a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

Mrs. Hard. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we must have patience wherever they are.

Miss Neville. I'll not believe it; this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss.

Mrs. Hard. Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

Tony. That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't!

Mrs. Hard. You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am!

Miss Neville. Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs. Hard. Now, I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and, in the meantime, you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

Miss Neville. I detest garnets!

Mrs. Hard. The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You *shall* have them. [*Exit.*

Miss Neville. I dislike them of all things. You shan't stir.—Was ever anything so provoking—to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear her trumpery.

Tony. Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage *her.*

Miss Neville. My dear cousin!

Tony. Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. [*Exit* Miss Neville.] Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catharine wheel!

Enter Mrs. Hardcastle.

Mrs. Hard. Confusion! thieves! robbers! We are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone!

Tony. What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family!

Mrs. Hard. We are robbed. My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone!

Tony. Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Hard. Why, boy, I *am* ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broke open, and all taken away.

Tony. Stick to that; ha, ha, ha! stick to that. I'll bear witness, you know, call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard. I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever.

Tony. Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

Mrs. Hard. My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

Tony. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Hard. Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest? I tell you I'm not in jest, booby!

Tony. That's right, that's right: You must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

Mrs. Hard. Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me! Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard. Bear witness again, you blockhead, you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of *her?* Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard. Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will!

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

[*He runs off, she follows him.*

Enter Miss Hardcastle *and* Maid.

Miss Hard. What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn, ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

Maid. But what is more, madam, the young gentleman as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the barmaid? He mistook you for the barmaid, madam!

Miss Hard. Did he? Then as I live I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the Beaux' Stratagem?

Maid. It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss Hard. And are you sure he does not remember my face or person?

Maid. Certain of it!

Miss Hard. I vow, I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such, that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

Maid. But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake?

Miss Hard. In the first place, I shall be *seen,* and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and like an invisible champion of romance examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid. But you are sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice, so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

Miss Hard. Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant.—Did your honor call?——Attend the Lion there.——Pipes and tobacco for the Angel.—The Lamb has been outrageous this half-hour!

Maid. It will do, madam. But he's here. [*Exit* MAID.

Enter MARLOW.

Marlow. What a bawling in every part of the house; I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her curtsey down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection. [*Walks and muses.*

Miss Hard. Did you call, sir? did your honor call?

Marlow [*Musing*]. As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss Hard. Did your honor call?

[*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*

Marlow. No, child! [*Musing.*] Besides from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss Hard. I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

Marlow. No, no! [*Musing.*] I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning.

[*Taking out his tablets, and perusing.*

Miss Hard. Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir?

Marlow. I tell you, no.

Miss Hard. I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants.

Marlow. No, no, I tell you. [*Looks full in her face.*] Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted——I wanted——I vow, child, you are vastly handsome!

Miss Hard. O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Marlow. Never saw a more sprightly malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye call it in the house?

Miss Hard. No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Marlow. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that, too!

Miss Hard. Nectar! nectar! that's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

Marlow. Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss Hard. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

Marlow. Eighteen years! Why one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

Miss Hard. O! sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

Marlow. To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. [*Approaching.*] Yet nearer I don't think so much. [*Approaching.*] By coming close to some women they look younger still; but when we come very close indeed [*Attempting to kiss her*].

Miss Hard. Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

Marlow. I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can ever be acquainted?

Miss Hard. And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle that was here awhile ago in this obstropalous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked, for all the world, as if you was before a justice of peace.

Marlow [*aside*]. Egad! she has hit it, sure enough. [*To her.*] In awe of her, child? Ha! ha! ha! A mere awkward, squinting thing, no, no! I find you don't know me. I laughed, and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

Miss Hard. O! then, sir, you are a favorite, I find, among the ladies?

Marlow. Yes, my dear, a great favorite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the Ladies' Club in

town I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons. Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service.

[*Offering to salute her.*

Miss Hard. Hold, sir; you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favorite there, you say?

Marlow. Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss Hard. Then it's a very merry place, I suppose.

Marlow. Yes, as merry as cards, suppers, wine, and old women can make us.

Miss Hard. And their agreeable Rattle, ha! ha! ha!

Marlow [*aside*]. Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. You laugh, child!

Miss Hard. I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

Marlow [*aside*]. All's well, she don't laugh at me. [*To her.*] Do *you* ever work, child?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

Marlow. Odso! Then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work you must apply to me.

[*Seizing her hand.*

Enter HARDCASTLE, *who stands in surprise.*

Miss Hard. Ay, but the colors don't look well by candle light. You shall see all in the morning. [*Struggling.*

Marlow. And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.——Pshaw! the father here! My old luck: I never nicked seven that I did not throw amesace three times following.

[*Exit* MARLOW.

Hard. So, madam! So I find *this* is your *modest* lover. This is your humble admirer that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Miss Hard. Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for, you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

Hard. By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid? And now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

Miss Hard. But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

Hard. The girl would actually make one run mad! I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence, and call it modesty. But my son-in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

Miss Hard. Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

Hard. You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

Miss Hard. Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

Hard. Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me?

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, you have ever found that I considered your commands as my pride; for your kindness is such, that my duty as yet has been inclination.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

[SCENE I.—THE HOUSE.]

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Hastings. You surprise me! Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night? Where have you had your information?

Miss Neville. You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr. Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

Hastings. Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

Miss Neville. The jewels, I hope, are safe.

Hastings. Yes, yes. I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the meantime, I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the 'Squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses; and, if I should not see him again, will write him further directions. [*Exit.*

Miss Neville. Well! success attend you. In the meantime, I'll go amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin. [*Exit.*

Enter MARLOW, *followed by a* SERVANT.

Marlow. I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Servant. Yes, your honor.

Marlow. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Servant. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it? and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. [*Exit* Servant.

Marlow. Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little barmaid though runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter Hastings.

Hastings. Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits too!

Marlow. Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

Hastings. Some women, you mean. But what success has your honor's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

Marlow. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely little thing that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

Hastings. Well! and what then?

Marlow. She's mine, you rogue, you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips——but egad! she would not let me kiss them though.

Hastings. But are you sure, so very sure of her?

Marlow. Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above-stairs, and I am to improve the pattern.

Hastings. But how can *you,* Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honor?

Marlow. Pshaw! pshaw! we all know the honor of the barmaid of an inn. I don't intend to *rob* her, take my word for it; there's nothing in this house I shan't honestly *pay* for!

Hastings. I believe the girl has virtue.

Marlow. And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

Hastings. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? It's in safety?

Marlow. Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety? Ah! numbskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself.——I have——

Hastings. What?

Marlow. I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

Hastings. To the landlady!

Marlow. The landlady.

Hastings. You did!

Marlow. I did. She's to be answerable for its forth-coming, you know.

Hastings. Yes, she'll bring it forth with a witness.

Marlow. Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion?

Hastings [*aside*]. He must not see my uneasiness.

Marlow. You seem a little disconcerted, though, methinks. Sure nothing has happened?

Hastings. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge?

Marlow. Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but, through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

Hastings. He! he! he! They're safe, however.

Marlow. As a guinea in a miser's purse.

Hastings [*aside*]. So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. [*To him.*] Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty barmaid, and, he! he! he! may you be as successful for yourself as you have been for me. [*Exit.*

Marlow. Thank ye, George! I ask no more. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter Hardcastle.

Hard. I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer, and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. [*To him.*] Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant.

[*Bowing low.*

Marlow. Sir, your humble servant. [*Aside.*] What's to be the wonder now?

Hard. I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so?

Marlow. I do, from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

Hard. I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

Marlow. I protest, my very good sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, *they* are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar, I did, I assure you. [*To the side scene.*] Here, let one of my servants come up. [*To him.*] My posi-

tive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

Hard. Then they had your orders for what they do! I'm satisfied!

Marlow. They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter Servant, *drunk.*

Marlow. You, Jeremy! Come forward, sirrah! What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

Hard. [*aside*]. I begin to lose my patience.

Jeremy. Please your honor, liberty and Fleet Street for ever! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, dammy! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon——hiccup——upon my conscience, sir.

Marlow. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

Hard. Zounds! He'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. Mr. Marlow. Sir; I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

Marlow. Leave your house!—Sure, you jest, my good friend! What, when I'm doing what I can to please you!

Hard. I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

Marlow. Sure, you cannot be serious! At this time of night, and such a night! You only mean to banter me!

Hard. I tell you, sir, I'm serious; and, now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

Marlow. Ha! ha! ha! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. [*In a serious tone.*] This your house, fellow! It's my house. This is my house. Mine, while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never met with such impudence, curse me, never in my whole life before!

Hard. Nor I, confound me if ever I did! To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me,—*This house is mine, sir.* By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, sir [*Bantering*], as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and here's a pair of brazen-nosed bellows, perhaps you may take a fancy to them?

Marlow. Bring me your bill, sir, bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

Hard. There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the Rake's Progress for your own apartment?

Marlow. Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

Hard. Then there's a mahogany table, that you may see your own face in.

Marlow. My bill, I say.

Hard. I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

Marlow. Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

Hard. Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred modest man, as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. [*Exit.*

Marlow. How's this! Sure, I have not mistaken the house? Everything looks like an inn. The servants cry "coming." The attendance is awkward; the barmaid, too, to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me. Whither so fast, child? A word with you.

Enter Miss Hardcastle.

Miss Hard. Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry.—[*Aside.*] I believe he begins to find out his mistake, but it's too soon quite to undeceive him.

Marlow. Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

Miss Hard. A relation of the family, sir.

Marlow. What? A poor relation?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir. A poor relation appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

Marlow. That is, you act as the barmaid of this inn.

Miss Hard. Inn! O law!—What brought that in your head? One of the best families in the county keep an inn! Ha, ha, ha, old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

Marlow. Mr. Hardcastle's house! Is this house Mr. Hardcastle's house, child?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure. Whose else should it be?

Marlow. So then all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O, confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura

in all the print-shops. The Dullissimo Maccaroni. To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an inn-keeper! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for! What a silly puppy do I find myself! There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the barmaid!

Miss Hard. Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my *behavior* to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

Marlow. Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over—this house I no more show *my* face in!

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry [*Pretending to cry.*] if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Marlow [*aside*]. By heaven, she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. [*To her.*] Excuse me, my lovely girl, you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune and education, make an honorable connexion impossible; and I can never harbor a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honor, or bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely.

Miss Hard. [*aside*]. Generous man! I now begin to admire him. [*To him.*] But I'm sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's, and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind, and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

Marlow. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss Hard. Because it puts me at a distance from one, that if I had a thousand pound I would give it all to.

Marlow [*aside*]. This simplicity bewitches me, so that if I stay I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. [*To her.*] Your partiality in my favor, my dear, touches me most sensibly, and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father, so that—I can scarcely speak it—it affects me! Farewell! [*Exit.*

Miss Hard. I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but will undeceive my papa, who, perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution. [*Exit.*

Enter Tony, Miss Neville.

Tony. Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time. I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

Miss Neville. But, my dear cousin, sure, you won't forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistlejacket, and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes, we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us. [*They retire, and seem to fondle.*

Enter Mrs. Hardcastle.

Mrs. Hard. Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see? Fondling together, as I'm alive! I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah! have I caught you, my pretty doves? What, billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs! Ah!

Tony. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

Mrs. Hard. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

Miss Neville. Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

Tony. O! it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

Miss Neville. Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humor, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless, [*Patting his cheek.*] ah! it's a bold face.

Mrs. Hard. Pretty innocence!

Tony. I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that, over the haspicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

Mrs. Hard. Ah, he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear?

You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY.

Diggory. Where's the 'Squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

Tony. Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

Diggory. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

Tony. Who does it come from?

Diggory. Your worship mun ask that of the letter itself.

Tony. I could wish to know, though.

[*Turning the letter, and gazing on it.*

Miss Neville [*aside*]. Undone, undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little if I can. [*To* MRS. HARDCASTLE.] But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed—you must know, madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us. [*They confer.*]

Tony [*Still gazing*]. A damned cramp piece of penmanship, as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. *To Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire.* It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it's all—buzz. That's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

Mrs. Hard. Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher!

Miss Neville. Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

Mrs. Hard. He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

Tony [*Still gazing*]. A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. [*Reading.*] *Dear Sir.* Ay, that's that. Then there's an *M*, and a *T*, and an *S*, but whether the next be an *izzard* or an *R*, confound me, I cannot tell!

Mrs. Hard. What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss Neville. Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. [*Twitching the letter from her.*] Do you know who it is from?

Tony. Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger the feeder.

Miss Neville. Ay, so it is. [*Pretending to read.*] "Dear 'Squire, Hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um, here, here, it's all about cocks, and fighting; it's of no consequence, here, put it up, put it up.

[*Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.*

Tony. But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world! I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea! Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence!

[*Giving* MRS. HARDCASTLE *the letter.*

Mrs. Hard. How's this! [*Reads.*] "Dear 'Squire, I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the *hag* (ay, the hag) your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours, Hastings." Grant me patience. I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me.

Miss Neville. I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design that belongs to another.

Mrs. Hard. [*Curtseying very low*]. Fine spoken, madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam. [*Changing her tone.*] And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut. Were you too joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with *me*. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You, too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory! I'll show you that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [*Exit.*

Miss Neville. So now I'm completely ruined.

Tony. Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss Neville. What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him?

Tony. By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags and Goose-greens that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hastings. So, sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

Tony. Here's another. Ask miss there who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW.

Marlow. So I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony. Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss Neville. And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

Marlow. What can I say to him? a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

Hastings. A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss Neville. Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

Hastings. An insensible cub.

Marlow. Replete with tricks and mischief.

Tony. Baw! damme, but I'll fight you both one after the other.——with baskets.

Marlow. As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hastings. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

Marlow. But, sir——

Miss Neville. Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Miss Neville. Well, well; I'll come presently.

Marlow [*To Hastings*]. Was it well done, sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous? To hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance? Depend upon it, sir, I shall expect an explanation.

Hastings. Was it well done, sir, if you're upon that subject, to deliver what I entrusted to yourself, to the care of another, sir?

Miss Neville. Mr. Hastings. Mr. Marlow. Why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute? I implore, I entreat you——

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. Your cloak, madam. My mistress is impatient. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Miss Neville. I come. Pray be pacified. If I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension!

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. Your fan, muff, and gloves, madam. The horses are waiting.

Miss Neville. O, Mr. Marlow! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

Marlow. I'm so distracted with a variety of passions, that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

Hastings. The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

Miss Neville. Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connection. If——

Mrs. Hard. [*Within*]. Miss Neville. Constance, why, Constance, I say.

Miss Neville. I'm coming. Well, constancy. Remember, constancy is the word. [*Exit.*

Hastings. My heart! How can I support this? To be so near happiness, and such happiness!

Marlow [*To* TONY]. You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

Tony [*From a reverie*]. Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours and yours, my poor Sulky. My boots there, ho! Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain! Come along. My boots, ho!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I—CONTINUES.

Enter HASTINGS *and* SERVANT.

Hastings. You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say?

Servant. Yes, your honor. They went off in a post-coach, and the young 'Squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time.

Hastings. Then all my hopes are over.

Servant. Yes, sir. Old Sir Charles is arrived. He and the old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr. Marlow's mistake this half-hour. They are coming this way.

Hastings. Then I must not be seen. So

now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Ha! ha! ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands.

Sir Charles. And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

Hard. And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir Charles. Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper, ha! ha! ha!

Hard. Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary: and though my daughter's fortune is but small——

Sir Charles. Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to *me?* My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do——

Hard. If, man! I tell you they *do* like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

Sir Charles. But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hard. I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your *ifs,* I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW.

Marlow. I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

Hard. Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

Marlow. Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

Hard. Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me.

Marlow. Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

Hard. Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what, as well as you that are younger. I know what has passed between you; but mum.

Marlow. Sure, sir, nothing has passed between us but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on hers. You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been passed upon all the rest of the family.

Hard. Impudence! No, I don't say that—Not quite impudence—Though girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

Marlow. I never gave her the slightest cause.

Hard. Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is over-acting, young gentleman. You *may* be open. Your father and I will like you the better for it.

Marlow. May I die, sir, if I ever——

Hard. I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her——

Marlow. Dear sir—I protest, sir——

Hard. I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

Marlow. But hear me, sir——

Hard. Your father approves the match, I admire it, every moment's delay will be doing mischief, so——

Marlow. But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

Hard. [*aside*]. This fellow's formal, modest impudence is beyond bearing.

Sir Charles. And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations!

Marlow. As heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. [*Exit.*

Sir Charles. I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

Hard. And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

Sir Charles. I dare pledge my life and honor upon his truth.

Hard. Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely, and without reserve; has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

Miss Hard. The question is very abrupt, sir! But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hard. [*To* SIR CHARLES]. You see.

Sir Charles. And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, several.

Hard. [*To* SIR CHARLES]. You see.

Sir Charles. But did he profess any attachment?

Miss Hard. A lasting one.

Sir Charles. Did he talk of love?

Miss Hard. Much, sir.

Sir Charles. Amazing! And all this formally?

Miss Hard. Formally.

Hard. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

Sir Charles. And how did he behave, madam?

Miss Hard. As most professed admirers do. Said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir Charles. Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting manner by no means describes him, and I am confident he never sat for the picture.

Miss Hard. Then what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half-an-hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir Charles. Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end. [*Exit.*

Miss Hard. And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

CHANGES TO THE BACK OF THE GARDEN.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hastings. What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow, who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, *booted and spattered.*

Hastings. My honest 'Squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

Tony. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by-the-bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

Hastings. But how? Where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

Tony. Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it: rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such *varment.*

Hastings. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

Tony. Left them? Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

Hastings. This is a riddle.

Tony. Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

Hastings. I'm still astray.

Tony. Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

Hastings. Ha, ha, ha, I understand; you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought th_m home again?

Tony. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-Bed Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill—I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-Tree Heath, and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

Hastings. But no accident, I hope.

Tony. No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So, if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge afoot to follow you.

Hastings. My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

Tony. Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'Squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn *your* way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

Hastings. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

Tony. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish. [*Exit* HASTINGS.] She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. Hard. Oh, Tony, I'm killed. Shook. Battered to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt that laid us against the quick-set hedge has done my business.

Tony. Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

Mrs. Hard. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

Tony. By my guess we should be upon Crack-skull Common, about forty miles from home.

Mrs. Hard. O lud! O lud! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

Tony. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man that's galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree. Don't be afraid.

Mrs. Hard. The fright will certainly kill me.

Tony. Do you see any thing like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

Mrs. Hard. O death!

Tony. No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid.

Mrs. Hard. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

Tony [*aside*]. Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. [*To her.*] Ah, it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow.

Mrs. Hard. Good heaven defend us! He approaches.

Tony. Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger I'll cough and cry hem. When I cough be sure to keep close.

[MRS. HARDCASTLE *hides behind a tree in the back scene.*

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. Oh, Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

Tony. Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

Mrs. Hard. [*From behind*]. Ah! I find there's danger.

Hard. Forty miles in three hours; sure, that's too much, my youngster.

Tony. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

Mrs. Hard. [*From behind*]. Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm.

Hard. But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came?

Tony. It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in four hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in if you please. Hem.

Hard. But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved [*Raising his voice.*] to find the other out.

Mrs. Hard. [*From behind*]. Oh! he's coming to find me out. Oh!

Tony. What need you go, sir, if I tell you? Hem. I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem—I'll tell you all, sir.

[*Detaining him.*

Hard. I tell you I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

Mrs. Hard. [*Running forward from behind*]. O lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling. Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy.

Hard. My wife! as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come, or what does she mean?

Mrs. Hard. [*Kneeling*]. Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice, indeed we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

Hard. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know *me?*

Mrs. Hard. Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits! So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door! [*To him.*] This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you! [*To her.*] Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree; and don't you remember the horsepond, my dear?

Mrs. Hard. Yes, I shall remember the horsepond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. [*To* TONY.] And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

Tony. Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Mrs. Hard. I'll spoil you, I will.

[*Follows him off the stage. Exit.*

Hard. There's morality, however, in his reply. [*Exit.*

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Hastings. My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost for ever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

Miss Neville. I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

Hastings. Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very mo-

ment. Perish fortune. Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail.

Miss Neville. No, Mr. Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion, fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr. Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

Hastings. But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

Miss Neville. But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

Hastings. I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

CHANGES [TO A ROOM AT MR. HARDCASTLE'S].

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* MISS HARDCASTLE.

Sir Charles. What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss Hard. I am proud of your approbation; and, to show I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir Charles. I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment. [*Exit* SIR CHARLES.

Enter MARLOW.

Marlow. Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave, nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss Hard. [*In her own natural manner*]. I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you think proper to regret.

Marlow [*aside*]. This girl every moment improves upon me. [*To her.*] It must not be, madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals, begin to lose their weight; and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss Hard. Then go, sir. I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter HARDCASTLE *and* SIR CHARLES *from behind.*

Sir Charles. Here, behind this screen.

Hard. Ay, ay, make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last.

Marlow. By heavens, madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence, and conscious virtue.

Sir Charles. What can it mean? He amazes me!

Hard. I told you how it would be. Hush!

Marlow. I am now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

Miss Hard. No, Mr. Marlow, I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connexion, in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion, to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness, which was acquired by lessening yours!

Marlow. By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me. Nor shall I ever feel repentance, but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay, even contrary to your wishes; and though you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct.

Miss Hard. Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity; but, seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connection, where *I* must appear mercenary, and *you* imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer?

Marlow [*Kneeling*]. Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue——

Sir Charles. I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation!

Hard. Your cold contempt! your formal interview! What have you to say now?

Marlow. That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

Hard. It means that you can say and

unsay things at pleasure. That you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter!

Marlow. Daughter!—this lady your daughter!

Hard. Yes, sir, my only daughter. My Kate, whose else should she be?

Marlow. Oh, the devil!

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, that very identical tall squinting lady you were pleased to take me for. [*Curtseying.*] She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the Ladies' Club: ha, ha, ha!

Marlow. Zounds, there's no bearing this; it's worse than death!

Miss Hard. In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy: or the loud confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning; ha, ha, ha!

Marlow. O, curse on my noisy head. I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

Hard. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man.

[*They retire, she tormenting him to the back scene.*

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE, TONY.

Mrs. Hard. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

Hard. Who gone?

Mrs. Hard. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor, here.

Sir Charles. Who, my honest George Hastings? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Hard. Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connection.

Mrs. Hard. Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune, that remains in this family to console us for her loss.

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary?

Mrs. Hard. Ay, that's my affair, not yours. But you know, if your son, when of age, refuses to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

Hard. Ah, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal.

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. Hard. [*aside*]. What! returned so soon? I begin not to like it.

Hastings [*to* HARDCASTLE]. For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

Miss Neville. Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready even to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I'm now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connection.

Mrs. Hard. Pshaw, pshaw! this is all but the whining end of a modern novel.

Hard. Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you?

Tony. What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

Hard. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare, you have been of age these three months.

Tony. Of age! Am I of age, father?

Hard. Above three months.

Tony. Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. [*Taking* MISS NEVILLE'S *hand.*] Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of BLANK place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constance Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again!

Sir Charles. O brave 'Squire!

Hastings. My worthy friend!

Mrs. Hard. My undutiful offspring!

Marlow. Joy, my dear George, I give you joy, sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favor.

Hastings [*to* MISS HARDCASTLE]. Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

Hard. [*Joining their hands*]. And I say so, too. And Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper, to-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the Mis-

takes of the Night shall be crowned with a merry morning; so boy, take her; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife.

EPILOGUE

By Dr. Goldsmith.

Well, having stooped to conquer with success,
And gained a husband without aid from dress,
Still as a barmaid, I could wish it too,
As I have conquered him to conquer you:
And let me say, for all your resolution,
That pretty barmaids have done execution.
Our life is all a play, composed to please,
"We have our exits and our entrances."
The first act shows the simple country maid,
Harmless and young, of everything afraid;
Blushes when hired, and with unmeaning action,
I hopes as how to give you satisfaction.
Her second act displays a livelier scene,—
Th' unblushing barmaid of a country inn,
Who whisks about the house, at market caters,
Talks loud, coquets the guests, and scolds the waiters.
Next the scene shifts to town, and there she soars,
The chop-house toast of ogling connoisseurs.
On 'Squires and Cits she there displays her arts,
And on the gridiron broils her lovers' hearts—
And as she smiles, her triumphs to complete,
Even Common Councilmen forget to eat.
The fourth act shows her wedded to the 'Squire,
And madam now begins to hold it higher;
Pretends to taste, at Operas cries *caro,*
And quits her *Nancy Dawson,* for *Che Faro.*
Doats upon dancing, and in all her pride,
Swims round the room, the *Heinel* of Cheapside:
Ogles and leers with artificial skill,
Till having lost in age the power to kill,
She sits all night at cards, and ogles at spadille.
Such, through our lives, the eventful history—
The fifth and last act still remains for me.
The barmaid now for your protection prays,
Turns female barrister, and pleads for Bayes.

EPILOGUE

To be spoken in the character of Tony Lumpkin.

By J. Cradock, Esq.

Well—now all's ended—and my comrades gone,
Pray what becomes of *mother's nonly son?*
A hopeful blade!—in town I'll fix my station,
And try to make a bluster in the nation.
As for my cousin Neville, I renounce her,
Off—in a crack—I'll carry big Bet Bouncer.
Why should not I in the great world appear?
I soon shall have a thousand pounds a year;
No matter what a man may here inherit,
In London—'gad, they've some regard for spirit.
I see the horses prancing up the streets,
And big Bet Bouncer bobs to all she meets;
Then hoikes to jiggs and pastimes ev'ry night—
Not to the plays—they say it a'n't polite,
To Sadler's-Wells perhaps, or Operas go,
And once by chance, to the roratorio.
Thus here and there, for ever up and down,
We'll set the fashions too, to half the town;
And then at auctions—money ne'er regard,
Buy pictures like the great, ten pounds a yard:
Zounds, we shall make these London gentry say,
We know what's damned genteel, as well as they.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

THE RIVALS AND THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

SHERIDAN'S great years may be divided naturally into two periods, one from 1774 to 1779, when he wrote his plays, the other from 1780 to 1812, when he sat in the House of Commons. In each period he delighted and astonished his contemporaries, in one by his comedies, which were a brilliant departure from the dull moralizing of the sentimental drama, in the other by his orations, which in their immediate effect upon his highly cultivated audiences are unequalled in the history of modern eloquence. The pity of his life is that his latter years should furnish a miserable anticlimax of domestic unhappiness, business misfortune, and public neglect.

Sheridan's ancestry does in some measure account for his genius. His grandfather, Rev. Thomas Sheridan, eccentric, learned, witty, the friend of Swift, and his father, the actor Thomas Sheridan, who as teacher of elocution had fashionable London at his feet, were men of very considerable intellectual ability. His mother was even more remarkable; she was the author of a novel that was commended by Dr. Johnson and Charles Fox, as well as of three comedies, one of which furnished her son with ideas for his own plays. This son, Richard Brinsley, was born in Dublin in 1751, and at the age of eleven entered the great public school of Harrow, where he remained for seven years. Then instead of going to the university he studied oratory with his father in London for two years till the family moved to Bath.

Bath was then at the height of its glory as the pleasure city of England, and it became the youthful Sheridan's training school more effectually than either Oxford or Cambridge could have been. Here he observed life in all its cosmopolitan frivolity, studied those varied types of humanity that gather in fashionable resorts, and stored up in his mind the raw material out of which he later made his wonderful comedies. Here, too, he came into public prominence as the protector and suitor of the gifted and beautiful singer, Elizabeth Linley, who, as Frances Burney said, had engrossed "all eyes, ears, hearts." To escape the persistent and distasteful addresses of a married man named Matthews she determined to flee to a convent in

France and accepted the glad services of Sheridan as her escort. So after a stormy passage to Dunkirk they proceeded to Calais, where, it seems, they were married, and thence to Lille. Here Miss Linley entered a convent, intending to remain "either till Sheridan came of age, or till he was in a position to support a wife." But Mr. Linley, the father, appeared and changed all that. He took the youthful lovers back with him to London, but at the end of a year, in 1773, he was induced to give his consent to their marriage according to the rites of the English Church, since their French "marriage" was not binding. Sheridan meanwhile fought two duels with the obnoxious Matthews and succeeded in driving him at least for a time from Bath.

As a means of support Sheridan now turned to the theatre, and by the end of 1774 he was able to announce the appearance of his first play, *The Rivals,* which was actually presented at Covent Garden Theatre January 17, 1775. High hopes were, however, disappointed. The house was crowded, but a hostile claque hissed disapproval; the excessive length of the play, the extravagance of some of the conceits, and the execrable acting of certain performers, especially Lee, who had the part of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, justified the unqualified damning of the play. Sheridan at once withdrew and revised it, and in ten days he again offered it to the public with the gratifying result that it "was received with the warmest bursts of approbation by a crowded and apparently impartial audience." As a thank-offering to the actor Clinch, who in the later performances had displaced the luckless Lee, Sheridan wrote a skit in forty-eight hours called *St. Patrick's Day or The Scheming Lieutenant.* It was presented at Covent Garden on May 2, 1775, and five more times that season. It is so slight that it merely calls for mention. In contrast to this plaything Sheridan's next piece, the comic opera *The Duenna,* revealed his best skill and won instantaneous and astonishing success. Mr. Linley, Sheridan's father-in-law and an accomplished musician, wrote the score, and the author and the composer worked so well together that, as Sichel says, "the music fitted it like a glove." It was perfomed on November 21, 1775, and ran for seventy-five nights. To-day only the lyrics remain to please; the opera is never acted and the wit has largely faded away. In recognition of Sheridan's literary merit Dr. Johnson had him elected (1777) to the Literary Club, remarking that "he who has written the two best comedies of his age [*The Rivals* and *The Duenna*] is surely a considerable man."

In 1776 on Garrick's retirement from the managership of Drury Lane Theatre Sheridan with two others acquired Garrick's half interest, and Sheridan was appointed manager in Garrick's stead. He worked over and expurgated Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* and under the title of *The Trip to Scarborough* he brought it out in his own theatre on February 24, 1777. It ran through ninety-nine performances. On May 8 of the same year he produced the greatest of his comedies, *The School for Scandal,* which ran

for twenty nights that season and for sixty-five the next. His next play, *The Critic,* a burlesque like Buckingham's *The Rehearsal* and Fielding's *Tom Thumb,* scored another triumph in 1779. Then when the theatre seemed to be opening to him a success unparalleled in his century, he stopped. Parliament had a greater lure; he preferred to be himself an actor on the stage of national political life.

So he entered the House of Commons in 1780 and remained there till, overwhelmed with debt, he was unable to meet election expenses in 1812 and was forced to turn his back forever upon St. Stephens. His rise to fame was rapid and his oratorical spell was soon upon the House. He was at the zenith of his glory in 1787-88 when he delivered his two great speeches against Hastings, one known as the "Begum speech," the other the accusation at the trial. Contemporary evidence points to the stupendous effect which these speeches had upon the listeners, who represented the wealth, the nobility, and the brains of England, an effect which we to-day are unable to feel, so much has the power and personality of the orator vanished from the written words. His greatest rival Burke, who lives to-day in his orations as Sheridan does not, said that the Begum speech was "the most astonishing effort of eloquence, argument, and wit united, of which there is any record or tradition."

While Sheridan was thus winning fame in the House, his affairs in Drury Lane were suffering from neglect and mismanagement. The theatre had to be repaired and enlarged at great expense; the costly production of Ireland's Shaksperean forgery *Vortigern and Rowena* (1796), by which Sheridan was completely taken in, was an utter failure. Two adaptations from the German of Kotzebue, *The Strangers* (1798) and *Pizarro* (1799), stayed temporarily the coming of disaster, but when in 1809 the theatre was burned, Sheridan knew that failure was complete. Meanwhile his wife had died (1792), and a second wife married in 1795 did not bring him happiness and did increase his financial worries. His ill-starred friendship with the disreputable Prince of Wales taught him all too well not to put his trust in princes. The closing years of his life were filled with suffering from disease and persecution by creditors, so that while he lay dying, a sheriff was in attendance. The end came in 1816 and then the nation characteristically made haste to give him a magnificent funeral in Westminster Abbey, where fittingly he lies in the Poets' Corner.

By the time the eighteenth century was entering upon its last quarter the sentimental drama had about run its course. Goldsmith in *The Good Natured Man* (1768) and *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) and Sheridan in *The Rivals* (1774) forswore allegiance to

> The goddess of the woful countenance—
> The Sentimental Muse.

Comedy became once more, in Meredith's phrase, "the fountain of sound sense, not the less perfectly sound because of its sparkle." The influence of the decaying fashion persists, however, in the sentimental nature of young Honeywood in *The Good Natured Man* as it does in the somewhat similar character of Charles Surface and in the hypocritical moralizing of Joseph Surface in *The School for Scandal,* but it has pretty well disappeared in *She Stoops to Conquer.* The sub-plot of *The Rivals* is wholly sentimental in appearance, but it is so manipulated that it becomes the object of mild satire rather than of tearful sympathy; it is just saved from being actual burlesque. Actual burlesque comes in *The Critic,* as when Sneer in speaking of the sentimental play says: "that's a genteel comedy, not a translation—only taken from the French: it is written in a style which they have lately tried to run down; the true sentimental, and nothing ridiculous in it from the beginning to the end"; and again in all seriousness he is made to say: "the theatre, in proper hands, might certainly be made the school of morality; but now, I am sorry to say it, people seem to go there principally for their entertainment." The sentimental comedy was dead.

Yet neither Goldsmith nor Sheridan struck out a new or original path. They but adapted to new conditions the comedy of the Restoration, especially that of Congreve and Farquhar; they followed Steele in his moral reaction from the indecency of the earlier plays without sinking into moralizing and dulness. It is comparatively easy to trace resemblances in situation and characterization between the plays of Sheridan and those of his predecessors. Thus in *The Rivals* critics have traced the pedigree of Mrs. Malaprop from Mrs. Tryfort in the elder Mrs. Sheridan's *A Journey to Bath* to Dogberry in *Much Ado* and Dame Quickly in *Henry IV;* they have shown the marked family resemblance of Lydia Languish to Biddy Tipkin in Steele's *The Tender Husband;* they might also show the similarity in conduct and manner of Captain Absolute and Fag to Bevil Jr. and Tom in Steele's *Conscious Lovers* and of Lucy to Phillis in the same play; they might point out that as Lydia will lose most of her fortune if she marries without her aunt's consent, so Millamant in Congreve's *The Way of the World* runs a similar risk under similar conditions. Likewise in *The School* originals have been found for the Surface brothers in Blifil and Tom Jones in Fielding's novel as well as in nearly all the hypocrites and their foils in earlier literature, for Sir Peter and Lady Teazle in Mr. and Mrs. Pinchwife in Wycherley's *The Country Wife,* and for the scandal scenes in the cabal nights in Congreve's *The Way of the World* All this and more Sheridan anticipated when he said: "Faded ideas float in the fancy like half-forgotten dreams; and the imagination in its fullest enjoyments becomes suspicious of its offspring, and doubts whether it has created or adopted."

Yet there was nothing of the mere copyist about Sheridan. His servants, for instance, talk and act more cleverly than is natural to those in their

station—so do their counterparts in Restoration comedy, who in turn are modelled on the servants in Latin drama,—but they are all vital and fit perfectly into their environment. The dialogue is witty, but it is as distinctly Sheridan's as the dialogue of Mirabell and Millamant is Congreve's. We recognize its flavor at once in the scenes between Acres and Sir Lucius, in those between Sir Peter and Lady Teazle, and in the scandal scenes. In his manipulation of plot, too, he shows extraordinary skill. Thus he avoids the intricacy that makes Congreve's plays hard to follow. In both *The Way of the World* and *The Rivals* the object of the hero is to marry the heroine without losing the money she will forfeit if she marries without her aunt's consent. Congreve invents an elaborate scheme to win the aunt's consent, whereas Sheridan subordinates the matter of the aunt's approval to a sort of merry by-play as of less importance than the swift and happy union of the lovers.

The interest of *The Rivals* is primarily theatrical. The play has successfully held the stage from its second performance with Quick as Acres to its modern presentation with Joseph Jefferson in the same rôle. The sentimental sub-plot is usually excised, since the interest in what was due only to the time has died with the time. The connection of the sub-plot with the main plot is, moreover, so slight that no loss is experienced as a result of the amputation. Even though Faulkland's fine-spun jealousies are the object of mild ridicule and though he serves as a foil to the romantic Lydia, the audience which has to listen to the utterance of his self-torturing suspicions will inevitably be bored. But in the main plot there is not a dull moment. The audience from the first is let into the Absolute-Beverley secret and it soon learns of the trick that is being played on Mrs. Malaprop and Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Rejoicing in its superior knowledge it is delighted in seeing how the mystified characters act in the complications which they could not foresee. So we have the highly comic scenes of Acres's arousing Faulkland's jealousy about Julia, of Sir Anthony's proposing a marriage to his son, each working at cross purposes, of Lucy's duplicities, of Captain Absolute's appeasing his father, of his posing as Beverley and thus deceiving Mrs. Malaprop and Lydia, and of his own discomfiture at the revelation of his pose, of Acres's challenging Beverley, and of the final clearing up on the duelling field. We are tickled when we see some persons who think they are controlling events caught by their own cleverness, and others who seem to be the victims of circumstance blundering into good luck; we laugh when a person for whom a trap is laid walks promptly into it, or when two characters wholly misunderstand each other and appear highly ridiculous to all but themselves; and we are vastly entertained when Bob Acres tries to bolster up a sinking courage and is treated as if he were a reckless fire-eater.

We have likewise the same theatrical pleasure in the characters and their words as we have in their actions. Sir Anthony's choleric temper will

always amuse any audience; Bob Acres with his referential oaths and his inflated courage is a perpetual joy; Mrs. Malaprop deranges her epitaphs to the unfailing delight of all who hear aspersions cast on her parts of speech. One is hurried along with such speed in the constant bustle of the action and the rapid fire of dialogue that no time remains to question the reasonableness of the characters or their speeches. Apart from the excitement of the theatre one realizes that Sir Anthony is made more precipitate than he would be in actual life, that Bob Acres manages his account of Julia's conduct too well for the occasion, and that he manufactures oaths too cleverly for the blockhead he is, that Mrs. Malaprop is so much "the queen of the dictionary" that one sees design on the part of her creator. But on the boards Sheridan's cleverness captures his audience before it has time to protest.

The exuberance of Sheridan's humor, indeed, carries his audience off its feet. It has all the marks of youth and genius, "rather," as Brander Matthews says, "the frank feeling for fun and appreciation of the incongruous . . . than the deeper and broader humor which we see at its full in Molière and Shakspere." One fully realizes that the leading characters are superficially portrayed—Sir Anthony, Mrs. Malaprop, and Acres,—that Sheridan does not touch in this play the springs of laughter that lie so close to the springs of tears. A youth of twenty-three could not plumb such comic depths or by means of humorous revelation make us know a man like Falconbridge or Falstaff. The humor of *The Rivals* is more "abundantly laughter-compelling" than the extremely clever wit of *The School.* Indeed Sheridan in the earlier play seems more like the youthful Shakspere of the rollicking comedies, while in the later play he resembles the finished artist of the Restoration comedy who wrote *The Way of the World.*

The present admirably articulated plot of *The School for Scandal* is the result of evolution through several stages. The scandal scenes go back to a short skit laid in Bath and called *The Slanderers—a Pump-Room Scene;* the Teazle affair and the intrigue of Lady Sneerwell to two other scenes intended at first for separate plays. "Solomon" and "Mrs." Teazle are much less pleasant people to know than Sir Peter and his lady, and their relation to each other is the familiar one of January and May with its inevitable quarrellings. In the second scene Maria is the orphaned niece and dependant of Lady Sneerwell, who "hides a passion for Sir Charles Clerimont . . . and tries to break off the attachment between him and Maria by pretending to dote on Sir Benjamin Backbite (the villain of the piece) and getting the girl to write love-letters for her to that precursor of Joseph Surface" (Sichel). Clerimont is thus made to believe Maria false, while Backbite makes love to both women. Sheridan indicates elsewhere that the finale was to consist in Backbite's mistaking the aunt in the dark for the niece and locking her in a cupboard. This incident is the germ of the screen scene. The Clerimont plot is sentimental and melodramatic, but it was toned

down when the hero was changed from a "romantic paragon into a good-hearted spendthrift." These three parts were now merged and such transformations achieved as made possible the present play. The scandal scenes were developed into the inimitable opening scene which takes up the greater part of Act I, the scene (II, ii) in which Lady Teazle finds herself quite at home in the School for Scandal and Sir Peter does not, and that (V, ii) in which is discussed with unholy enthusiasm the affair of the Teazles and Joseph Surface. These form a sort of background into which the main concerns of the comedy are so skilfully merged that to separate them would mean cutting the living tissue of the piece. One cannot but notice the advance over *The Rivals* in the constructive ingenuity of the plotting. The Clerimont plot was very considerably changed and improved. Backbite became a mere scandal-monger to make way for Joseph Surface. Clerimont was transformed into Charles Surface, the brother of Joseph, both of whom had been wards of Sir Peter Teazle. Sir Rowland Harpur was brought into the Surface family as the uncle of the brothers, was called Sir Oliver Surface, and was made an old bachelor friend of Sir Peter. Maria is made independent of Lady Sneerwell. Moses was invented to fit in with the new spendthrift hero Charles. Joseph was altered from a scheming villain to a "sentimental knave." Two splendid climactic scenes were invented, one, the auction of the pictures, to bring to a head the spendthrift and generous impulses of Charles, the other, the screen scene, to reveal the knavery of Joseph and straighten out the affairs of the Teazles.

Such faults as the play has are hardly noticed in the performance. One does not stop to question the probability of the off-stage arrival in the screen scene of the fourth person—in some versions, Lady Sneerwell—while Joseph is entertaining Lady Teazle, Sir Peter, and Charles, or the likelihood that he would leave them alone while he is disposing of this unwelcome visitor. The fun and the suspense shut out all questionings. Even the speeches directed to the audience for their information, the asides and soliloquies, the conveniently happy and unhappy meetings at unexpected moments, the rather palpable business of Stanley, are not noticed in the theatrical effectiveness of the whole. Indeed Sheridan dares to follow a strong climax with what would be flat anti-climaxes unless properly managed; but so deliciously are these scenes presented that the gossip which rages about Lady Teazle, the revelation of the identity of Stanley and Premium with Sir Oliver, and the exposure of Lady Sneerwell but carry the comedy to a triumphant close.

The character-drawing of *The School* is immensely superior to that of *The Rivals*. Sir Peter is far more human than Sir Anthony. One realizes that he has not been created for the sake of the scene but that the scene is built naturally about him. He is a fine old country gentleman who has fallen in love with a young, pretty, and, at heart, good girl whose head has been turned by her new environment. One admires as well as loves him;

whereas one regards Sir Anthony much as one would an exceedingly funny caricature. Charles and Joseph are counterpart presentments of the sentimental type: one is the hero, the reliever of the distressed—so long as the distress is not due to his non-payment of just bills,—the devoted nephew, who cherishes *one* portrait, the reformed rake, who flees from folly to the sanctuary of "Love and You," as he says to Maria in the closing words of the play; the other is the moralizer, who keeps his sentiments for all but his friends, and in whom the type, because it was made utterly contemptible, was killed for dramatic presentation. It is very pleasant to see this representative of a decadent society reduced to ineffective protestation by one whose heart is yet sound though it had approached the perilous verge that separates moral life and death.

No play in our volume has had a more brilliant theatrical record. From that memorable occasion on May 8, 1777, when "a house packed with every section of society welcomed an epoch-making play" (Sichel) to the summer of 1909 when Sir Beerbohm Tree delighted audiences in His Majesty's Theatre, London, the comedy has demonstrated the permanency of Sheridan's *wit,* which is "steeped in the very brine of conceit and sparkles like salt in the fire." A gala performance at the Grand Opera House, Toronto, in the presence of the Governor-General of Canada, the Marquis of Dufferin, the great grandson of the author, was given exactly a hundred years after the première. It has for over a century had a brilliant history on the American stage. It has also been produced in Paris, Vienna, Venice, and in an adapted form in Bombay.

THE RIVALS

PROLOGUE

BY THE AUTHOR

Spoken by Mr. *Woodward* and Mr. *Quick*

Enter Serjeant at Law and Attorney.

Serj. WHAT's here! a vile cramp hand! I cannot see
Without my spectacles.
Att. [*Aside*] He means his fee.
Nay, Mr. Serjeant, good sir, try again. [*Gives money.*
Serj. The scrawl improves. [*More*] O come, 'tis pretty plain.
How's this? The poet's brief *again!* O ho!
Cast, I suppose?
Att. O pardon me—no—no—
We found the court, o'erlooking stricter laws,

Indulgent to the *merits* of the cause;
By *judges* mild, unused to harsh denial,
A rule was granted for *another trial.*
Serj. Then heark'ee, *Dibble,* did you *mend* your *pleadings?*
Errors, no few, we've *found* in our *proceedings.*
Att. Come, courage, sir, we did *amend* our *plea,*
Hence your *new brief,* and this *refreshing fee.*
Some sons of Phœbus in the courts we meet.
Serj. And fifty sons of Phœbus in the Fleet!
Att. Nor pleads he worse, who with a decent sprig
Of bays adorns his legal waste of wig.
Serj. Full-bottomed heroes thus, on signs, unfurl
A leaf of laurel in a grove of curl!
Yet tell your client, that, in adverse days,
This wig is warmer than a bush of bays.
Att. Do you, then, sir, my client's place supply,
Profuse of robe, and prodigal of tye——
Do you, with all those blushing powers of face,
And wonted bashful hesitating grace,
Rise in the court, and flourish on the case.

[*Exit.*

Serj. [*Addressing the audience*] For practice, then, suppose—this brief will show it,—
Me, Serjeant *Woodward,*—council for the poet.
Used to the ground—I know 'tis hard to deal
With this dread *court,* from whence there's *no appeal;*
No *tricking* here, to blunt the edge of *law,*
Or, damned in *equity*—escape by *flaw:*
But *judgment* given—*your sentence* must remain;
—No *writ of error* lies—to *Drury-lane!*
Yet, when so kind you seem—'tis past dispute
We gain some favor, if not *costs of suit.*
No spleen is here! I see no hoarded fury;
—I think I never faced a milder jury!
Sad else our plight!—where frowns are transportation,
A hiss the gallows,—and a groan, damnation!
But such the public candor, without fear
My client waives all *right of challenge* here.
No newsman from *our* session is dismissed,
Nor wit nor critic *we* scratch off the list;
His faults can never hurt another's ease,
His crime at worst—a *bad attempt* to please:
Thus, all respecting, he appeals to all,
And by the general voice will *stand* or *fall.*

PROLOGUE

BY THE AUTHOR

Spoken on the tenth night, by Mrs. *Bulkley*

GRANTED our cause, our suit and trial o'er,
The worthy serjeant need appear no more:
In pleading I a different client choose;
He served the poet—I would serve the Muse.
Like him, I'll try to merit your applause,
A female counsel in a female's cause.
Look on this form,—where humor, quaint and sly,
Dimples the cheek, and points the beaming eye;
Where gay invention seems to boast its wiles
In amorous hint, and half-triumphant smiles;
While her light mask or covers satire's strokes,
Or hides the conscious blush her wit provokes.
Look on her well—does she seem formed to teach?
Should you expect to hear this lady preach?
Is grey experience suited to her youth?
Do solemn sentiments become that mouth?
Bid her be grave, those lips should rebel prove
To every theme that slanders mirth or love.
Yet, thus adorned with every graceful art
To charm the fancy and yet reach the heart——
Must we displace her, and instead advance
The goddess of the woful countenance—
The sentimental Muse?—Her emblems view,
The Pilgrim's Progress, and a sprig of rue!
View her—too chaste to look like flesh and blood—
Primly portrayed on emblematic wood!
There, fixed in usurpation, should she stand,
She'll snatch the dagger from her sister's hand:
And having made her votaries weep a flood,
Good heaven! she'll end her comedies in blood—
Bid Harry Woodward break poor Dunstal's crown!
Imprison Quick, and knock Ned Shuter down;
While sad Barsanti, weeping o'er the scene,
Shall stab herself—or poison Mrs. Green.
Such dire encroachments to prevent in time,
Demands the critic's voice—the poet's rhyme.
Can our light scenes add strength to holy laws?

Such puny patronage but hurts the cause:
Fair virtue scorns our feeble aid to ask;
And moral truth disdains the trickster's mask.
For here their favorite stands, whose brow severe
And sad, claims youth's respect, and pity's tear;
Who, when oppressed by foes her worth creates,
Can point a poniard at the guilt she hates.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN	WOMEN
Sir Anthony Absolute.	Mrs. Malaprop.
Capt. Absolute.	Lydia Languish.
Faulkland.	Julia.
Acres.	Lucy.
Sir Lucius O'Trigger.	
Fag.	
David.	
Coachman.	

Maid, Boy, Servants, &c.

Scene.—Bath.

Time of Action, Five Hours.

ACT I

Scene I

A Street in Bath.

Coachman *crosses the stage.—Enter* Fag, *looking after him.*

Fag. What!—Thomas!—Sure, 'tis he.—What!—Thomas!—Thomas!

Coach. Hay!—Odd's life!—Mr. Fag!—give us your hand, my old fellow-servant.

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas.—I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad. Why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty!—but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath!

Coach. Sure, Master, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postilion be all come!

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Aye! Master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit:—so he'd a mind to gi't the slip, and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Aye, aye! hasty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute!

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young master? Odd! Sir Anthony will stare to see the Captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Capt. Absolute now.

Coach. Why sure!

Fag. At present I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! Why, didn't you say you had left young master?

Fag. No.—Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no farther:—briefly then—Capt. Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Coach. The devil they are!

Fag. So it is indeed, Thomas; and the *Ensign* half of my master being on guard at present—the *Captain* has nothing to do with me.

Coach. So, so!—What, this is some freak, I warrant!—Do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning o't—you know I ha' trusted you.

Fag. You'll be secret, Thomas?

Coach. As a coach-horse.

Fag. Why then the cause of all this is—Love,—Love, Thomas, who (as you may get read to you) has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Coach. Aye, aye;—I guessed there was a lady in the case:—but pray, why does your master pass only for *Ensign*?—Now if he had shammed *General*, indeed——

Fag. Ah! Thomas, there lies the mystery

o' the matter.—Hark'ee, Thomas, my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste: a lady who likes him better as a *half-pay Ensign* than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet with three thousand a-year!

Coach. That is an odd taste indeed!—But has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? Is she rich, hey?

Fag. Rich!—Why, I believe she owns half the stocks!—Z—ds! Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easy as I could my washerwoman!—She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold,—she feeds her parrot with small pearls,—and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

Coach. Bravo!—Faith!—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least. But does she draw kindly with the Captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish.—But there is an old tough aunt in the way;—though, by the by—she has never seen my master—for he got acquainted with Miss while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

Coach. Well—I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony.—But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath?—I ha' heard a deal of it—Here's a mort o' merry-making—hey?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge. Though at present we are, like other great assemblies, divided into parties—High-roomians and Low-roomians. However, for my part, I have resolved to stand neuter; and so I told Bob Brush at our last committee.

Coach. But what do the folks do here?

Fag. Oh! there are little amusements enough.—In the morning we go to the Pump-room (though neither my master nor I drink the waters); after breakfast we saunter on the Parades, or play a game at billiards; at night we dance. But d—n the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours stupify me—not a fiddle nor a card after eleven!—However Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties.—I'll introduce you there, Thomas—you'll like him much.

Coach. Sure I know Mr. Du-Peigne—you know his master is to marry Madam Julia.

Fag. I had forgot.—But Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed you must.—Here now—this wig! what the devil do you do with a *wig*, Thomas?—None of the London whips of any degree of ton wear *wigs* now.

Coach. More's the pity! more's the pity, I say.—Odd's life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next:—Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the Bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the Box!—But 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and look'ee, I'll never gi' up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that.

Coach. Why, bless you, the gentlemen of the professions ben't all of a mind—for in our village now, tho'ff *Jack Gauge*, the *exciseman*, has ta'en to his carrots, there's little Dick, the farrier, swears he'll never forsake his *bob*, tho' all the college should appear with their own heads!

Fag. Indeed! well said, Dick! But hold—mark! mark! Thomas.

Coach. Zooks! 'tis the Captain!—Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No! no! that is Madam Lucy—my master's mistress's maid.—They lodge at that house.—But I must after him to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd! he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag——

Fag. Good bye, Thomas.—I have an appointment in Gyde's Porch this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II

A Dressing-Room in Mrs. Malaprop's *Lodgings.*

Lydia *sitting on a sofa, with a book in her hand.*—Lucy, *as just returned from a message.*

Lucy. Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it:—I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lyd. And could not you get "*The Reward of Constancy*"?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "*The Fatal Connection*"?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "*The Mistakes of the Heart*"?

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill-luck would have it, Mr. Bull said Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—Did you inquire for "*The Delicate Distress*"?—

Lucy. Or "*The Memoirs of Lady Woodford*"? Yes indeed, ma'am.—I asked every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a christian to read.

Lyd. Heigho-ho!—Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me.—She has a most observing thumb; and I believe cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes.—Well, child, what *have* you brought me?

Lucy. Oh! here, ma'am. [*Taking books from under her cloak, and from her pockets.*] This is "*The Gordian Knot*,"—and this

"Peregrine Pickle." Here are *"The Tears of Sensibility"* and *"Humphry Clinker."* This is *"The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, written by herself,"*—and here the second volume of *"The Sentimental Journey."*

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—What are those books by the glass?

Lucy. The great one is only *"The Whole Duty of Man"*—where I press a few blonds, ma'am.

Lyd. Very well—give me the *sal volatile.*

Lucy. Is it in a blue cover, ma'am?

Lyd. My smelling bottle, you simpleton!

Lucy. Oh, the drops!—Here, ma'am.

Lyd. No note, Lucy?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am—but I have seen a certain person——

Lyd. What, my Beverley!—Well, Lucy?

Lucy. O ma'am! he looks so desponding and melancholic!

Lyd. Hold, Lucy!—here's some one coming—quick! see who it is.—[*Exit* Lucy.] Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

Re-enter Lucy.

Lucy. Lud! ma'am, here is Miss Melville.

Lyd. Is it possible!——

Enter Julia.

Lyd. My dearest Julia, how delighted am I!—[*Embrace*] How unexpected was this happiness!

Jul. True, Lydia—and our pleasure is the greater.—But what has been the matter?—you were denied to me at first!

Lyd. Ah! Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you!—But first inform me what has conjured you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Jul. He is—we are arrived within this hour—and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

Lyd. Then, before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress!—I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, tho' your prudence may condemn me!—My letters have informed you of my whole connection with Beverley;—but I have lost him, Julia!—my aunt has discovered our intercourse by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since!——Yet, would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet she met one night since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffle's rout.

Jul. You jest, Lydia!

Lyd. No, upon my word.—She absolutely carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses to be known to him;—but it is a *Delia* or a *Celia,* I assure you.

Jul. Then surely she is now more indulgent to her niece.

Lyd. Quite the contrary. Since she has discovered her own frailty she is become more suspicious of mine. Then I must inform you of another plague!—That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; so that I protest I shall be teased out of all spirits!

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope the best.—Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

Jul. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all!—But, I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together we had never had a quarrel!—And somehow I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity.—So last Thursday I wrote a letter to myself to inform myself that Beverley was at that time paying his addresses to another woman.—I signed it *your friend unknown,* showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vowed I'd never see him more.

Jul. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out. I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever!

Jul. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so. Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign, and you have thirty thousand pounds!

Lyd. But you know I lose most of my fortune if I marry without my aunt's consent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty.—Nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lyd. What, does Julia tax me with caprice?—I thought her lover Faulkland had enured her to it.

Jul. I do not love even *his* faults.

Lyd. But a-propos—you have sent to him, I suppose?

Jul. Not yet, upon my word—nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath.—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden I could not inform him of it.

Lyd. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress (though under the protection of Sir Anthony), yet have you for this long year been the slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Jul. Nay, you are wrong entirely.—We were contracted before my father's death.—*That,* and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulk-

land's most ardent wish.—He is too generous to trifle on such a point.—And for his character, you wrong him there too.—No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble to be jealous. If he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness.—Unused to the foppery of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover—but being unhackneyed in the passion, his love is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every thought and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his.—Yet, though his pride calls for this full return—his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him which should entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not loved enough.—This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardor of his love.

Lyd. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him.—But tell me candidly, Julia, had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are?—Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him!

Jul. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet surely that alone were an obligation sufficient.

Lyd. Obligation!—Why, a water-spaniel would have done as much.—Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!

Jul. Come, Lydia, you are too inconsiderate.

Lyd. Nay, I do but jest.—What's here?

Enter LUCY *in a hurry.*

Lucy. O ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute just come home with your aunt.

Lyd. They'll not come here.—Lucy, do you watch. [*Exit* LUCY.

Jul. Yet I must go.—Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet he'll detain me to show me the town.—I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me as long as she chooses with her select words so ingeniously *misapplied,* without being *mispronounced.*

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. O Lud! ma'am, they are both coming up stairs.

Lyd. Well, I'll not detain you, coz.—Adieu, my dear Julia. I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland.—There—through my room you'll find another stair-case.

Jul. Adieu.—— [*Embrace. Exit* JULIA.

Lyd. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books.—Quick, quick!—Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet—throw *Roderick Random* into the closet—put *The Innocent Adultery* into *The Whole Duty of Man*—thrust *Lord Aimworth* under the sofa—cram *Ovid* behind the bolster—there—put *The Man of Feeling* into your pocket—so, so,—now lay *Mrs. Chapone* in sight, and leave *Fordyce's Sermons* open on the table.

Lucy. O burn it, ma'am! the hair-dresser has torn away as far as *Proper Pride.*

Lyd. Never mind—open at *Sobriety.*—Fling me *Lord Chesterfield's Letters.*—Now for 'em.

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, *and* SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling!

Lyd. Madam, I thought you once——

Mrs. Mal. You thought, miss!—I don't know any business you have to think at all—thought does not become a young woman. The point we would request of you is that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

Lyd. Ah! madam! our memories are independent of our wills.—It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. Mal. But I say it is, miss. There is nothing on earth so easy as to *forget,* if a person chooses to set about it.—I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed—and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

Sir Anth. Why sure she won't pretend to remember what she's ordered not!—Aye, this comes of her reading!

Lyd. What crime, madam, have I committed to be treated thus?

Mrs. Mal. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it.—But tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid?—Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

Lyd. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. Mal. What business have you, miss, with *preference* and *aversion?* They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little *aversion.* I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a black-a-moor—and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made!—and when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed!—But suppose we were

going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lyd. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. Mal. Take yourself to your room.—You are fit company for nothing but your own ill-humors.

Lyd. Willingly, ma'am.—I cannot change for the worse. [*Exit* Lydia.

Mrs. Mal. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir Anth. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am—all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read.—Had I a thousand daughters, by Heavens! I'd as soon have them taught the black-art as their alphabet!

Mrs. Mal. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an absolute misanthropy.

Sir Anth. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library!—She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marbled covers!—From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. Mal. Those are vile places, indeed!

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an ever-green tree of diabolical knowledge!—It blossoms through the year!—And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. Mal. Well, but Sir Anthony, your wife, Lady Absolute, was fond of books.

Sir Anth. Aye—and injury sufficient they were to her, madam.—But were I to choose another helpmate, the extent of her erudition should consist in her knowing her simple letters, without their mischievous combinations;—and the summit of her science be—her ability to count as far as twenty.—The first, Mrs. Malaprop, would enable her to work *A. A.* upon my linen;—and the latter would be quite sufficient to prevent her giving me a shirt No. 1 and a stock No. 2.

Mrs. Mal. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony, you surely speak laconically!

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. Mal. Observe me, Sir Anthony.—I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman; for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments;—but, Sir Anthony, I would send her at nine years old to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice.—Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts;—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not mis-spell, and mis-pronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying.—This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you; though I must confess that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question.—But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate,—you say you have no objection to my proposal.

Mrs. Mal. None, I assure you.—I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres, and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir Anth. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. Mal. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir Anth. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas "Jack do this;"—if he demurred—I knocked him down—and if he grumbled at that—I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. Mal. Aye, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations;—and I hope you will represent *her* to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir Anth. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently.—Well, I must leave you—and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl;—take my advice—keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal—clap her under lock and key;—and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about! [*Exit* Sir Anth.

Mrs. Mal. Well, at any rate I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition.—She has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger—Sure, Lucy can't have betrayed me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton I should have made her confess

it.—Lucy!—Lucy!—[*Calls*] Had she been one of your artificial ones I should never have trusted her.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Did you call, ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. Mal. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned——

Lucy. O Gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out.

Mrs. Mal. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

Lucy. No, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. So, come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius.—But mind, Lucy—if ever you betray what you are entrusted with—(unless it be other people's secrets to me) you forfeit my malevolence forever:—and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality.

[*Exit* MRS. MALAPROP.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha!—So, my dear *simplicity*, let me give you a little respite.—[*Altering her manner*]—Let girls in my station be as fond as they please of appearing expert, and knowing in their trusts—commend me to a mask of *silliness*, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account I have turned my *simplicity* lately—[*Looks at a paper*] For *abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an Ensign!—in money—sundry times—twelve pound twelve — gowns, five — hats, ruffles, caps &c., &c.—numberless!—From the said Ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half.*—About a quarter's pay!—Item, *from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her*—when I found matters were likely to be discovered—*two guineas, and a black paduasoy.*—Item, *from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters*—which I never delivered—*two guineas, and a pair of buckles.*—Item, *from Sir Lucius O'Trigger—three crowns—two gold pocket-pieces—and a silver snuff-box!*—Well done, *simplicity!*—Yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe that he was corresponding, not with the *aunt*, but with the *niece:* for, though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [*Exit.*

ACT II

SCENE I

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE'S *Lodgings.*

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *and* FAG.

Fag. Sir, while I was there Sir Anthony came in: I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Abs. And what did he say on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished! He started back two or three paces, rapt out a dozen interjectoral oaths, and asked what the devil had brought you here!

Abs. Well, sir, and what did you say?

Fag. O, I lied, sir—I forget the precise lie; but you may depend on't, he got no truth from me. Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what *has* brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently.—Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious indeed.

Abs. You have said nothing to them——?

Fag. O, not a word, sir,—not a word.—Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)——

Abs. S'death!—you rascal! you have not trusted him!

Fag. O, *no,* sir!—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity!—He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, sir—devilish sly!—My master (said I), honest Thomas (you know, sir, one says *honest* to one's inferiors), is come to Bath to *recruit.*—Yes, sir—I said, *to recruit*—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Abs. Well—*recruit*—will do—let it be so——

Fag. O, sir, recruit will do surprisingly.—Indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas that your Honor had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard markers.

Abs. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon.—But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it.—Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge *indorsements,* as well as the bill.

Abs. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security.—Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

Abs. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in, but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol.—I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down.

Abs. Go tell him I am here.

Fag. Yes, sir.—[*Going*] I beg pardon, sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favor to remember that we are *recruiting,* if you please.

Abs. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderness to my character,

if your Honor could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation;—for though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it *hurts* one's conscience to be found out. [*Exit.*

Abs. Now for my whimsical friend.—If he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him——

Enter Faulkland.

Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

Abs. Faith, much as they were. I have not seen her since our quarrel; however, I expect to be recalled every hour.

Faulk. Why don't you persuade her to go off with you at once?

Abs. What, and lose two thirds of her fortune? You forget that, my friend.—No, no, I could have brought her to that long ago.

Faulk. Nay then, you trifle too long.—If you are sure of *her,* propose to the aunt *in your own character,* and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

Abs. Softly, softly, for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side. No, no, I must prepare her gradually for the discovery, and make myself necessary to her, before I risk it.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

Faulk. Indeed, I cannot. I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Abs. By Heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man!

Faulk. I own I am unfit for company.

Abs. Am not *I* a lover; aye, and a romantic one too? Yet do I carry every where with me such a confounded farrago of doubts, fears, hopes, wishes, and all the flimsy furniture of a country miss's brain?

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object.—You throw for a large stake, but losing—you could stake, and throw again:—but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stript of all.

Abs. But, for Heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present? Has Julia missed writing this last post? or was her last too tender, or too cool; or too grave, or too gay; or——

Faulk. Nay, nay, Jack.

Abs. Why, her love — her honor — her prudence, you cannot doubt.

Faulk. O! upon my soul, I never have.—But what grounds for apprehension did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand! I fear for her spirits—her health—her life.—My absence may fret her; her anxiety for my return, her fears for me, may oppress her gentle temper. And for her health—does not every hour bring me cause to be alarmed? If it rains, some shower may even then have chilled her delicate frame!—If the wind be keen, some rude blast may have affected her! The heat of noon, the dews of the evening, may endanger the life of her, for whom only I value mine. O! Jack, when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Abs. Aye, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or no.—Well then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia was well and in spirits, you would be entirely content?

Faulk. I should be happy beyond measure—I'm anxious only for that.

Abs. Then to cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath!

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

Abs. She is arrived here with my father within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be serious?

Abs. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously then, it is as I tell you—upon my honor.

Faulk. My dear friend! — Hollo, Du-Peigne! my hat.—My dear Jack—*now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.*

Enter Fag.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres just arrived is below.

Abs. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her.—Fag, show the gentleman up. [*Exit* Fag.

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Abs. O, very intimate. I insist on your not going: besides, his character will divert you.

Faulk. Well, I should like to ask him a few questions.

Abs. He is likewise a rival of mine—that is of my *other self's,* for he does not think his friend Capt. Absolute ever saw the lady in question;—and it is ridiculous

enough to hear him complain to me of *one Beverley*, a concealed sculking rival, who——

Faulk. Hush!—He's here.

Enter Acres.

Acres. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how do'st thou? Just arrived, faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads, Jack!—Odds, whips and wheels! I've travelled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way as long as the Mall.

Abs. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric planet; but we know your attraction hither.—Give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you. Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you: Sir, I solicit your connections.—Hey, Jack,—what,—this is Mr. Faulkland, who——?

Abs. Aye, Bob, Miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Od'so! she and your father can be but just arrived before me:—I suppose you have seen them.——Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man.

Faulk. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, sir.—I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire?

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, sir—never better.—Odd's blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

Faulk. Indeed!—I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

Acres. False, false, sir—only said to vex you: quite the reverse, I assure you.

Faulk. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

Abs. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick.

Faulk. No, no, you misunderstand me:—yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love.—Now confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

Abs. O, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack.

Faulk. Well, sir, but you were saying that Miss Melville has been so *exceedingly* well—what, then, she has been merry and gay, I suppose?—Always in spirits—hey?

Acres. Merry! Odds crickets! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humor!

Faulk. There, Jack, there!—O, by my soul! there is an innate levity in woman, that nothing can overcome.—What! happy and I away!

Abs. Have done. How foolish this is! Just now you were only apprehensive for your mistress's *spirits*.

Faulk. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

Abs. No, indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Abs. O, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humor?

Abs. No, faith; to do you justice, you have been confounded stupid indeed.

Acres. What's the matter with the gentleman?

Abs. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faulk. Oh! I am rejoiced to hear it—yes, yes, she has a *happy* disposition!

Acres. That she has indeed.—Then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month.—Odds minnums and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concerts!

Faulk. There again, what say you to this? You see she has been all mirth and song—not a thought of me!

Abs. Pho! man, is not music the food of love?

Faulk. Well, well, it may be so.—Pray, Mr. —— what's his d—d name?—Do you remember what songs Miss Melville sung?

Acres. Not I, indeed.

Abs. Stay now, they were some pretty, melancholy, purling-stream airs, I warrant; perhaps you may recollect;—did she sing —"*When absent from my soul's delight*"?

Acres. No, that wa'n't it.

Abs. Or—"*Go, gentle gales*"?——"*Go, gentle gales!*" [*Sings.*]

Acres. O no! nothing like it.—Odds slips! now I recollect one of them—"*My heart's my own, my will is free.*" [*Sings.*]

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifler! S'death! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to soothe her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you say to this, sir?

Abs. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, *sir*.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I am not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—I would not have had her sad or sick—yet surely a sympathetic heart would have shown itself even in the choice of a song—she might have been temperately healthy, and, somehow, plaintively gay;—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not!

Acres. What does the gentleman say about dancing?

Abs. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

Acres. Aye, truly, does she.—There was at our last race-ball——

Faulk. Hell and the devil! There! there! —I told you so! I told you so! Oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing!—but her whole feelings have been in opposition with mine!—I have been anxious, silent, pensive, sedentary—my days have been hours of care, my nights of watchfulness.—She has been all Health! Spirit! Laugh! Song! Dance!—Oh! d—ned, d—ned levity!

Abs. For Heaven's sake! Faulkland, don't expose yourself so.—Suppose she has danced, what then?—Does not the ceremony of society often oblige——

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myself.—Perhaps, as you say—for form sake.—What, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a *minuet*—hey?

Acres. Oh I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of was her *country dancing:*—Odds swimmings! she has such an air with her!—

Faulk. Now disappointment on her!—Defend this, Absolute, why don't you defend this?—Country-dances! jiggs, and reels! Am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say I should not have regarded a minuet—but *country-dances!* Z——ds! had she made one in a cotillon—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet thro' a string of amorous palming puppies!—to show paces like a managed filly!—O Jack, there never can be but *one* man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a *country-dance;* and even then, the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts!

Abs. Aye, to be sure!—grand-fathers and grand-mothers!

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, 'twill spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jigg—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the very air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts thro' every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it. [*Going.*

Abs. Aye aye, you are in a hurry to throw yourself at Julia's feet.

Faulk. I'm not in a humor to be trifled with.—I shall see her only to upbraid her. [*Going.*

Abs. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. D—n his news! [*Exit* Faulkland.

Abs. Ha! ha! ha! Poor Faulkland! Five minutes since—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!"

Acres. The gentleman wa'n't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

Abs. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don't say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me?—that's a good joke.

Abs. There's nothing strange in that, Bob: let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah! you joke—ha! ha!—mischief—ha! ha! But you know I am not my own property; my dear Lydia has forestalled me.—She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but odds frogs and tambours! I shan't take matters so here—now ancient madam has no voice in it.—I'll make my old clothes know who's master.—I shall straightway cashier the hunting-frock—and render my leather breeches incapable.—My hair has been in training some time.

Abs. Indeed!

Acres. Aye—and tho'ff the side-curls are a little restive, my hind-part takes to it very kindly.

Abs. O, you'll polish, I doubt not.

Acres. Absolutely I propose so.—Then if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Abs. Spoke like a man.—But pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing——

Acres. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it?—'Tis genteel, isn't it?—I didn't invent it myself, though; but a commander in our militia—a great scholar, I assure you—says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable;—because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment;—so that to swear with propriety, says my little major, the "oath should be an echo to the sense"; and this we call the *oath referential,* or *sentimental swearing*—ha! ha! ha! 'Tis genteel, isn't it?

Abs. Very genteel, and very new, indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Aye, aye, the best terms will grow obsolete.——D—ns have had their day.

Enter Fag.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you.—Shall I show him into the parlor?

Abs. Aye—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone——

Abs. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, sir.

Abs. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly? [*Exit* Fag.

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings.—I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.—Adieu, Jack! We must meet at night.—Odds bottles and glasses! you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

Abs. That I will, with all my heart.

[*Exit* Acres.

Abs. Now for a parental lecture.—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here.—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter Sir Anthony.

Abs. Sir, I am delighted to see you here, and looking so well!—Your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir Anth. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Abs. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

Sir Anth. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, tho' I did not expect it, for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Abs. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty; and I pray frequently that you may continue so.

Sir Anth. I hope your prayers may be heard with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time.—Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Abs. Sir, you are very good.

Sir Anth. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Abs. Sir, your kindness overpowers me.—Such generosity makes the gratitude of reason more lively than the sensations even of filial affection.

Sir Anth. I am glad you are so sensible of my attention—and you shall be master of a large estate in a few weeks.

Abs. Let my future life, sir, speak my gratitude: I cannot express the sense I have of your munificence——Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir Anth. O, that shall be as your wife chooses.

Abs. My wife, sir!

Sir Anth. Aye, aye,—settle that between you—settle that between you.

Abs. A *wife*, sir, did you say?

Sir Anth. Aye, a wife—why, did not I mention her before?

Abs. Not a word of it, sir.

Sir Anth. Odd so!—I mus'n't forget *her*, tho'.—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife.—But I suppose that makes no difference.

Abs. Sir! sir!—you amaze me!

Sir Anth. Why, what the d——l's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Abs. I was, sir.—You talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir Anth. Why—what difference does that make? Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Abs. If my happiness is to be the price, I must beg leave to decline the purchase.—Pray, sir, who is the lady?

Sir Anth. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love, and to marry her directly.

Abs. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir Anth. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to *object* to a lady you know nothing of.

Abs. Then, sir, I must tell you plainly that my inclinations are fixed on another.

Sir Anth. They are, are they? Well, that's lucky—because you will have more merit in your obedience to me.

Abs. Sir, my heart is engaged to an angel.

Sir Anth. Then pray let it send an excuse. ——It is very sorry—but *business* prevents its waiting on her.

Abs. But my vows are pledged to her.

Sir Anth. Let her foreclose, Jack; let her foreclose; they are not worth redeeming: besides, you have the angel's vows in exchange, I suppose; so there can be no loss there.

Abs. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Hark'ee, Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool;—but take care—you know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted;—no one more easily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

Abs. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Now, d—n me! if ever I call you *Jack* again while I live!

Abs. Nay, sir, but hear me.

Sir Anth. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! so give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you don't, by——

Abs. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness! to——

Sir Anth. Z——ds! sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the Crescent; her one eye shall roll like the Bull's in Coxe's museum—she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, sirrah! —yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.

Abs. This is reason and moderation indeed!

Sir Anth. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

Abs. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humor for mirth in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis false, sir! I know you are laughing in your sleeve: I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

Abs. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir Anth. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence! if you please.—It won't do with me, I promise you.

Abs. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! But it won't do.

Abs. Nay, sir, upon my word.

Sir Anth. So you will fly out! Can't you be cool, like me? What the devil good can *passion* do!—*Passion* is of no service, you impudent, insolent, overbearing reprobate!—There you sneer again!—don't provoke me!—But you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the weakness of my disposition! Yet take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last! —but mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do every thing on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you—— If not, z——ds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest.—I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and—d—n me, if ever I call you Jack again!

[*Exit* Sir Anthony.

Absolute, *solus.*

Abs. Mild, gentle, considerate father—I kiss your hands.—What a tender method of giving his opinion in these matters Sir Anthony has! I dare not trust him with the truth.—I wonder what old wealthy hag it is that he wants to bestow on me!—Yet he married himself for love! and was in his youth a bold intriguer, and a gay companion!

Enter Fag.

Fag. Assuredly, sir, our father is wrath to a degree. He comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the bannisters all the way: I, and the cook's dog, stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my master; then kicking the poor turnspit into the area, d—ns us all for a puppy triumvirate! —Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place, and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

Abs. Cease your impertinence, sir, at present.—Did you come in for nothing more? —Stand out of the way!

[*Pushes him aside, and exit.*

Fag, *solus.*

Fag. Soh! Sir Anthony trims my master. He is afraid to reply to his father—then vents his spleen on poor Fag!—When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another who happens to come in the way—is the vilest injustice! Ah! it shows the worst temper—the basest——

Enter Errand-Boy.

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your master calls you.

Fag. Well, you little, dirty puppy, you need not bawl so!—The meanest disposition! the——

Boy. Quick, quick, Mr. Fag!

Fag. *Quick, quick,* you impudent jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you too? you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred—— [*Exit, kicking and beating him.*

Scene II

The North Parade.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. So—I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute. ——However, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received notice in form. Poor Acres is dismissed!—Well, I have done him a last friendly office in letting him know that Beverley was here before him.—Sir Lucius is generally more punctual when he

expects to hear from his *dear Dalia,* as he calls her:—I wonder he's not here!—I have a little scruple of conscience from this deceit; tho' I should not be paid so well, if my hero knew that *Delia* was near fifty, and her own mistress.—I could not have thought he would have been so nice, when there's a golden egg in the case, as to care whether he has it from a pullet or an old hen!

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir Luc. Hah! my little embassadress—upon my conscience, I have been looking for you. I have been on the South Parade this half-hour.

Lucy. [*Speaking simply*] O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir Luc. Faith!—may be that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical, too, how you could go out and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-house, and I chose the *window* on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars! Now I'd wager a six-pence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir Luc. Sure enough it must have been so—and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have:—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir Luc. O faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed.—Well—let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius.

[*Gives him a letter.*

Sir Luc. [*Reads*] "Sir—there is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger."—Very pretty, upon my word.—"As my motive is interested, you may be assured my love shall never be miscellaneous." Very well. "Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections. — Yours, while meretricious — DELIA." Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language.—Faith, she's quite the queen of the dictionary!—for the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call—tho' one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy. Aye, sir, a lady of her experience——

Sir Luc. Experience! what, at seventeen?

Lucy. O true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off-hand!

Sir Luc. Faith, she must be very deep read to write this way—tho' she is rather an arbitrary writer too—for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom.——However, when affection guides the pen, Lucy, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

Lucy. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

Sir Luc. O tell her I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain!—But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent—and do everything fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice!

Sir Luc. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it:—I am so poor that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure.—However, my pretty girl [*Gives her money*], here's a little something to buy you a ribband; and meet me in the evening, and I'll give you an answer to this. So, hussy, take a kiss before-hand to put you in mind.

[*Kisses her.*

Lucy. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never seed such a gemman! My lady won't like you if you're so impudent.

Sir Luc. Faith she will, Lucy——That same——pho! what's the name of it?—*Modesty!*——is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked; so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her *fifty*—my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir Luc. Ah, then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently. [*Kisses her.*

Lucy. For shame now; here is some one coming.

Sir Luc. O faith, I'll quiet your conscience.

[*Sees* FAG.—*Exit, humming a tune.*

Enter FAG.

Fag. So, so, ma'am. I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O lud!—now, Mr. Fag—you flurry one so.

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please.——You play false with us, madam.—I saw you give the baronet a letter.—My master shall know this—and if he don't call him out—I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty.—That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton.—She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

Fag. What tastes some people have!—Why, I suppose I have walked by her window an hundred times.——But what says our young lady? Any message to my master?

Lucy. Sad news, Mr. Fag!—A worse rival

than Acres!—Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, Captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so.—I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha!—very good, faith.—Good-bye, Lucy, I must away with this news.

Lucy. Well,—you may laugh—but it is true, I assure you. [*Going*] But—Mr. Fag—tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag. O, he'll be so disconsolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear!—never fear!

Lucy. Be sure—bid him keep up his spirits.

Fag. We will—we will. [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT III

Scene I

The North Parade.

Enter Absolute.

Abs. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed.—Whimsical enough, faith! My father wants to *force* me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with!—He must not know of my connection with her yet a-while.—He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters—and Lydia shall not yet lose her hopes of an elopement. However, I'll read my recantation instantly.—My conversion is something sudden, indeed—but I can assure him it is very *sincere.*——So, so—here he comes.—He looks plaguy gruff. [*Steps aside.*

Enter Sir Anthony.

Sir Anth. No—I'll die sooner than forgive him.—*Die,* did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him.—At our last meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper.—An obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy!—Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters!—for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a-year, beside his pay ever since!—But I have done with him;—he's any body's son for me.—I never will see him more,—never—never—never—never!

Abs. Now for a penitential face.

Sir Anth. Fellow, get out of my way.

Abs. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir Anth. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Abs. A sincere penitent.—I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir Anth. What's that?

Abs. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, and condescension to me.

Sir Anth. Well, sir?

Abs. I have been likewise weighing and balancing what you were pleased to mention concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir Anth. Well, puppy?

Abs. Why then, sir, the result of my reflections is—a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

Sir Anth. Why, now you talk sense—absolute sense—I never heard any thing more sensible in my life.——Confound you, you shall be *Jack* again!

Abs. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir Anth. Why then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you—who the lady really is.—Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented my telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture!—prepare!——What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

Abs. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire?

Sir Anth. Worcestershire! No. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

Abs. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, stay—I think I do recollect something.——*Languish! Languish!* She squints, don't she?—A little, red-haired girl?

Sir Anth. Squints?—A red-haired girl!—Z——ds, no!

Abs. Then I must have forgot; it can't be the same person.

Sir Anth. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

Abs. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent.—If I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir Anth. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! Not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips!—O Jack, lips smiling at their own discretion; and if not smiling, more sweetly pouting; more lovely in sullenness!

Abs. [*Aside*] That's she, indeed.—Well done, old gentleman!

Sir Anth. Then, Jack, her neck!—O Jack! Jack!

Abs. And which is to be mine, sir, the niece or the aunt?

Sir Anth. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you! When I was of your

age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! The *aunt,* indeed!—Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly to gain an empire.

Abs. Not to please your father, sir?

Sir Anth. To please my father!—— Z——ds! not to please——O, my father!—Oddso!—yes—yes! if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter.—Tho' he wa'n't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Abs. I dare say not, sir.

Sir Anth. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

Abs. Sir, I repeat it; if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind.—Now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and tho' *one* eye may be very agreeable, yet as the prejudice has always run in favor of *two,* I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir Anth. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you're an anchorite!—a vile, insensible stock.—You a soldier!—you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on!—Odds life! I've a great mind to marry the girl myself!

Abs. I am entirely at your disposal, sir; if you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the *aunt;* or if you should change your mind, and take the old lady—'tis the same to me—I'll marry the *niece.*

Sir Anth. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or——but come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must—come, now—d—n your demure face!—come, confess, Jack—you have been lying—ha'n't you? You have been lying, hey? I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't:—so now, own, my dear Jack, you have been playing the hypocrite, hey?—I'll never forgive you if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Abs. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

Sir Anth. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me, I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly.

Abs. Where does she lodge, sir?

Sir Anth. What a dull question!—Only on the Grove here.

Abs. O! then I can call on her in my way to the coffee-house.

Sir Anth. In your way to the coffee-house! You'll set your heart down in your way to the coffee-house, hey? Ah! you leaden-nerved, wooden-hearted dolt! But come along, you shall see her directly; her eyes shall be the Promethian torch to you—come along. I'll never forgive you if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience.—If you don't, egad, I'll marry the girl myself! [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Julia's *Dressing-Room.*

Faulkland, *solus.*

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly; wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! Yet I know not that I indulge it in any other point:—but on this one subject, and to this one object, whom I think I love beyond my life, I am ever ungenerously fretful, and madly capricious!—I am conscious of it—yet I cannot correct myself! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met!—How delicate was the warmth of her expressions!—I was ashamed to appear less happy—though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations;—yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so *very* happy in my absence.—She is coming!—Yes!—I know the nimbleness of her tread when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter Julia.

Jul. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome—restrained as we were by the presence of a third person?

Jul. O Faulkland, when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered more coolness in your first salutation than my long-hoarded joy could have presaged.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia.—I *was* rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health.—Sure I had no cause for coldness?

Jul. Nay then, I see you have taken something ill.—You must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well then—shall I own to you?—but you will despise me, Julia—nay, I despise myself for it.——Yet I *will* own, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbor Acres, was something damped by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire—on your mirth—your singing—dancing, and

I know not what!—For such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment in your absence as a treason to constancy.—The mutual tear that steals down the cheek of parting lovers is a compact that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Jul. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing minute caprice?—Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: no, no—I am happy if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with *mirth*—say that you *thought* of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your absence.—If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth.——If I seemed sad—it were to make malice triumph, and say that I had fixed my heart on one who left me to lament his roving, and my own credulity.—Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you when I say that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me.—O, I am a brute when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Jul. If ever, without such cause from you, as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude.

Faulk. Ah! Julia, that *last* word is grating to me. I would I had no title to your *gratitude!* Search your heart, Julia; perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart!

Jul. For what quality must I love you?

Faulk. For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding were only to *esteem* me. And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation *there* for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where Nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men who in *this* vain article perhaps might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now this is not well from *you*, Julia.—I despise person in a man.—Yet if you loved me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

Jul. I see you are determined to be unkind.—The *contract* which my poor father bound us in gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts.—I would not have been more free—no—I am proud of my restraint.——Yet—yet—perhaps your high respect alone for this solemn compact has fettered your inclinations, which else had made worthier choice.—How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought and promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

Jul. Then try me now.—Let us be free as strangers as to what is past:—*my* heart will not feel more liberty!

Faulk. There now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free!—If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your hold, even tho' I wished it!

Jul. O, you torture me to the heart!—I cannot bear it.

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you.—If I loved you less I should never give you an uneasy moment.—But hear me.—All my fretful doubts arise from this—Women are not used to weigh, and separate the motives of their affections:—the cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty, may sometimes be mistaken for the pleadings of the heart.——I would not boast—yet let me say that I have neither age, person, or character to found dislike on;—my fortune such as few ladies could be charged with *indiscretion* in the match.—O Julia! when *Love* receives such countenance from *Prudence*, nice minds will be suspicious of its *birth.*

Jul. I know not whither your insinuations would tend:—as they seem pressing to insult me—I will spare you the regret of having done so.—I have given you no cause for this! [*Exit in tears.*

Faulk. In tears! Stay, Julia: stay but for a moment.——The door is fastened!—Julia!—my soul—but for one moment.—I hear her sobbing!—'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus! Yet stay!—Aye—she is coming now.—How little resolution there is in woman!—How a few soft words can turn them!——No, faith!—she is *not* coming either!——Why, Julia—my love—say but that you forgive me—come but to tell me that.—Now, this is being *too* resentful.—Stay! she *is* coming too—I thought she would—no *steadiness* in any thing! her going away must have been a mere trick then.—She sha'n't see that I was hurt by it.—I'll affect indifference.—[*Hums a tune: then listens*]——No—Z—ds! she's *not* coming!—nor don't intend it, I suppose.—This is not *steadiness*, but *obstinacy!* Yet I deserve it.—What, after so long an absence to quarrel with her tenderness!—'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated—and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever! and be linked instead to

some antique virago, whose gnawing passions, and long-hoarded spleen shall make me curse my folly half the day, and all the night! [*Exit.*

SCENE III

MRS. MALAPROP'S *Lodgings.*

MRS. MALAPROP, *and* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. Mal. Your being Sir Anthony's son, Captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation;—but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Abs. Permit me to say, madam, that as I never yet have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair at present is the honor of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop; of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. Mal. Sir, you do me infinite honor!—I beg, Captain, you'll be seated.—[*Sit*]—Ah! few gentlemen now a days know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman!—few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman! Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower, beauty!

Abs. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am.—Yet I fear our ladies should share the blame—they think our admiration of *beauty* so great, that *knowledge* in *them* would be superfluous. Thus, like garden-trees, they seldom show fruits till time has robbed them of the more specious blossom.—Few, like Mrs. Malaprop and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once!

Mrs. Mal. Sir—you overpower me with good-breeding.—He is the very pine-apple of politeness!—You are not ignorant, Captain, that this giddy girl has somehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eaves-dropping Ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows any thing of.

Abs. O, I have heard the silly affair before.—I'm not at all prejudiced against her on *that* account.

Mrs. Mal. You are very good, and very considerate, Captain.—I am sure I have done every thing in my power since I exploded the affair! Long ago I laid my positive conjunction on her never to think on the fellow again;—I have since laid Sir Anthony's preposition before her;—but, I'm sorry to say, she seems resolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her.

Abs. It must be very distressing, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. It gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but behold this very day I have interceded another letter from the fellow! I believe I have it in my pocket.

Abs. O the devil! my last note. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Aye, here it is.

Abs. Aye, my note, indeed! O the little traitress Lucy. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. There, perhaps you may know the writing. [*Gives him the letter.*

Abs. I think I have seen the hand before.—Yes, I *certainly must* have seen this hand before:——

Mrs. Mal. Nay, but read it, Captain.

Abs. [*Reads*] "*My soul's idol, my adored Lydia!*"—Very tender, indeed!

Mrs. Mal. Tender! aye, and profane, too, o' my conscience!

Abs. "*I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival*"——

Mrs. Mal. That's *you*, sir.

Abs. "*has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honor.*"——Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. Mal. O, the fellow had some design in writing so.

Abs. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

Abs. "*As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon who guards you*"—Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. Mal. Me! Sir—*me!*—he means *me!* There—what do you think now?—But go on a little further.

Abs. Impudent scoundrel!—"*it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance, as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand*"——

Mrs. Mal. There, sir! an attack upon my language! What do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! Was ever such a brute! Sure if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs!

Abs. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! Let me see—"*same ridiculous vanity*"—

Mrs. Mal. You need not read it again, sir.

Abs. I beg pardon, ma'am——"*does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration*"—an impudent coxcomb!——"*so that I have a scheme to see you shortly with the old harridan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews.*"—Was ever such assurance!

Mrs. Mal. Did you ever hear any thing like it?—He'll elude my vigilance, will he?

—Yes, yes! ha! ha! He's very likely to enter these doors!—We'll try who can plot best!

Abs. Ha! ha! ha! A conceited puppy, ha! ha! ha!——Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while *I*, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. Mal. I am delighted with the scheme; never was any thing better perpetrated!

Abs. But, pray, could not I see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. Mal. Why, I don't know—I doubt she is not prepared for a first visit of this kind.—There is a decorum in these matters.

Abs. O Lord! she won't mind *me*—only tell her Beverley——

Mrs. Mal. Sir!——

Abs. [*Aside*] Gently, good tongue.

Mrs. Mal. What did you say of Beverley?

Abs. O, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below—she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mal. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves.—Besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha!—Let him if he can, I say again.—Lydia, come down here! [*Calling*]—He'll make me a *go-between in their interviews!*—ha! ha! ha!—Come down, I say, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing, ha! ha! ha!—his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Abs. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Mal. The little hussy won't hear.—Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is.—She shall know that Capt. Absolute is come to wait on her.—And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Abs. As you please, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. For the present, Captain, your servant.—Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I see—*elude my vigilance!*—yes, yes, ha! ha! ha! [*Exit.*

Abs. Ha! ha! ha! one would think now I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security—but such is Lydia's caprice that to undeceive were probably to lose her.—I'll see whether she knows me.

[*Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the pictures.*

Enter Lydia.

Lyd. What a scene am I now to go thro'! Surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart.—I have heard of girls persecuted as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favored lover to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer too!—but O, how unlike my Beverley!—I wonder he don't begin—Truly he seems a very negligent wooer!—Quite at his ease, upon my word!—I'll speak first [*Aloud*]——Mr. Absolute.

Abs. Madam. [*Turns round.*

Lyd. O Heavens! Beverley!

Abs. Hush!—hush, my life!—Softly! Be not surprised.

Lyd. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed!—For Heaven's sake! how came you here?

Abs. Briefly—I have deceived your aunt.—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on *her* for Capt. Absolute.

Lyd. O, charming!—And she really takes you for young Absolute?

Abs. O, she's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing to think how her sagacity is overreached!

Abs. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur—then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserved persecution, and with a licensed warmth plead for my reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?—that burthen on the wings of love?

Abs. O, come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness.—Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia—for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him!

Abs. Ah! my soul, what a life will we then live! Love shall be our idol and support! We will worship him with a monastic strictness; abjuring all worldly toys, to centre every thought and action there.—Proud of calamity, we will enjoy the wreck of wealth; while the surrounding gloom of adversity shall make the flame of our pure love show doubly bright.—By Heavens! I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me—but here. [*Embracing her*]——If she holds out now the devil is in it! [*Aside.*

Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes! but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis.

Enter Mrs. Malaprop, *listening.*

Mrs. Mal. I'm impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself. [*Aside.*

Abs. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. Mal. Warmth abated!—So!—she has been in a passion, I suppose. [*Aside.*

Lyd. No—nor never can while I have life.

Mrs. Mal. An ill-tempered little devil!—She'll be *in a passion all her life*—will she? [*Aside.*

Lyd. Think not the idle threats of my ridiculous aunt can ever have any weight with me.

Mrs. Mal. Very dutiful, upon my word! [*Aside.*

Lyd. Let her choice be *Capt. Absolute,* but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. Mal. I am astonished at her assurance!—*to his face—this to his face!* [*Aside.*

Abs. Thus then let me enforce my suit. [*Kneeling.*

Mrs. Mal. [*Aside*] Aye—poor young man!—down on his knees entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer.—[*Aloud*] Why, hussy! hussy!—I have overheard you.

Abs. O, confound her vigilance! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Capt. Absolute—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

Abs. So—all's safe, I find. [*Aside.*

I have hopes, madam, that time will bring the young lady——

Mrs. Mal. O there's nothing to be hoped for from her! She's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lyd. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

Lyd. No, madam—I did not.

Mrs. Mal. Good Heavens! what assurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman!—Didn't you boast that Beverley—that stroller Beverley, possessed your heart?—Tell me that, I say.

Lyd. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley——

Mrs. Mal. Hold — hold, Assurance! — you shall not be so rude.

Abs. Nay, pray Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech:—she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt *me* in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. Mal. You are *too* good, Captain—*too* amiably patient—but come with me, miss.—Let us see you again soon, Captain.—Remember what we have fixed.

Abs. I shall, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lyd. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev——

Mrs. Mal. Hussy! I'll choke the word in your throat!—come along—come along.

[*Exeunt severally,* Absolute *kissing his hand to* Lydia—Mrs. Malaprop *stopping her from speaking.*

Scene IV

Acres's *Lodgings.*

Acres *and* David.

Acres *as just dressed.*

Acres. Indeed, David—do you think I become it so?

Dav. You are quite another creature, believe me, master, by the Mass! an' we've any luck we shall see the Devon monkey-rony in all the print-shops in Bath!

Acres. Dress *does* make a difference, David.

Dav. 'Tis all in all, I think.—Difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod-Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you, Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard presarve me!" our dairy-maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your Honor's favorite, would blush like my waistcoat.—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there a'n't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether *Phillis* would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Aye, David, there's nothing like *polishing.*

Dav. So I says of your Honor's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr. De-la-Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

Dav. I'll call again, sir.

Acres. Do—and see if there are any letters for me at the post-office.

Dav. I will.—By the Mass, I can't help looking at your head!—If I hadn't been by at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself! [*Exit.*

Acres *comes forward practising a dancing step.*

Acres. Sink, slide—coupee!—Confound the first inventors of cotillons! say I—they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen.—I can walk a minuet easy enough when I'm forced!—and I have been accounted a good stick in a country-dance.—Odds jigs and tabors!—I never valued your cross-over two couple—figure in—right and left—

and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the county! — But these outlandish heathen Allemandes and Cotillons are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at 'em, that's sure.—Mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their curst French lingo!—their *pas* this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other!—D—n me! my feet don't like to be called paws! No, 'tis certain I have most antigallican toes!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

Acres. Show him in.

Enter Sir Lucius.

Sir Luc. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir Luc. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres. Faith! I have followed Cupid's Jack-a-Lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last.—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius.—I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as on a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir Luc. Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius, I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival, and receive answer that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of.—This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir Luc. Very ill, upon my conscience.—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, *one* Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir Luc. A rival in the case, is there?—And you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

Acres. Unfairly!—to be sure he has.—He never could have done it fairly.

Sir Luc. Then sure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir Luc. We wear no swords here, but you understand me.

Acres. What! fight him?

Sir Luc. Aye, to be sure: what can I mean else?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir Luc. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world.—Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another than to fall in love with the same woman? O, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship!

Acres. Breach of *friendship!* Aye, aye; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

Sir Luc. That's no argument at all.—He has the less right then to take such a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad, that's true.—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace! Odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valor in him and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right of my side?

Sir Luc. What the d—l signifies *right* when your *honor* is concerned? Do you think *Achilles,* or my little *Alexander the Great* ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broadswords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valor rising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say.——Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir Luc. Ah, my little friend! if we had *Blunderbuss-Hall* here—I could show you a range of ancestry in the O'Trigger line that would furnish the new room, every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipt through my fingers, I thank God our honor, and the family-pictures, are as fresh as ever.

Acres. O Sir Lucius! I have had ancestors too! every man of 'em colonel or captain in the militia!—Odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it—my nerves are become catgut! my sinews wire! and my heart pinchbeck! The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!——Z—ds! as the man in the play says, "I could do such deeds!"

Sir Luc. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case.—These things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius.—I must be in a rage.—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me.—Come, here's pen and paper. [*Sits down to write.* I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good *bold hand,* however.

Sir Luc. Pray compose yourself.

Acres. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! do the thing *decently* and like a Christian. Begin now,—"*Sir*"——

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir Luc. "*To prevent the confusion that might arise*"—

Acres. [*Writing*] Well——

Sir Luc. "*From our both addressing the same lady*"——

Acres. Aye — there's the reason—[*Writing*] "*same lady*"—Well——

Sir Luc. "*I shall expect the honor of your company*"——

Acres. Z——ds! I'm not asking him to dinner.

Sir Luc. Pray be easy.

Acres. Well then [*Writing*]—"*honor of your company*"——

Sir Luc. "*To settle our pretensions*"—

Acres. [*Writing*] Well—

Sir Luc. Let me see—aye, *King's Mead-fields* will do—"*In King's Mead-fields.*"

Acres. So that's done.—Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest—a hand and dagger shall be the seal.

Sir Luc. You see now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

Acres. Aye, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir Luc. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time.—Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir Luc. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening.—I would do myself the honor to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here, who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman to call him out.

Acres. By my valor, I shall like to see you fight first! Odds life! I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson.

Sir Luc. I shall be very proud of instructing you.—Well for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner.—Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished, as your sword. [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT IV

Scene I

Acres's *Lodgings.*

Acres *and* David.

David. Then, by the Mass, sir! I would do no such thing—ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight, when I wa'n't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say when she hears o't!

Acres. Ah! David, if you had heard Sir Lucius!—Odds sparks and flames! he would have roused your valor.

David. Not he, indeed. I hates such bloodthirsty cormorants. Look'ee, master, if you'd wanted a bout at boxing, quarter-staff, or short-staff, I should never be the man to bid you cry off: but for your curst sharps and snaps, I never knew any good come of 'em.

Acres. But my *honor*, David, my *honor!* I must be very careful of my honor.

David. Aye, by the Mass! and I would be very careful of it; and I think in return my *honor* couldn't do less than to be very careful of *me.*

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honor!

David. I say then, it would be but civil in *honor* never to risk the loss of the *gentleman.* — Look'ee, master, this *honor* seems to me to be a marvellous false friend; aye, truly, a very courtier-like servant.—Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank God, no one can say of me); well—my honor makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance.—So—we fight. (Pleasant enough that). Boh!—I kill him—(the more's my luck). Now, pray who gets the profit of it?—Why, my *honor.*—But put the case that he kills me!—by the Mass! I go to the worms, and my honor whips over to my enemy!

Acres. No, David—in that case!—Odds crowns and laurels! your honor follows you to the grave.

David. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Z——ds, David, you're a coward!—It doesn't become my valor to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors?—Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

David. Under favor, the surest way of not disgracing them is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look'ee now, master, to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But David, now, you don't think there is such very, very, *very* great danger, hey?—Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

David. By the Mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you!—Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his d—ned double-barrelled swords, and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord bless us! it makes

me tremble to think o't.—Those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide 'em!—from a child I never could fancy 'em!—I suppose there a'n't so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Z—ds! I *won't* be afraid!—Odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid!—Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend Jack Absolute to carry it for me.

David. Aye, i' the name of mischief, let *him* be the messenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the best horse in your stable. By the Mass! it don't look like another letter! It is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter!—and I warrant smells of gunpowder, like a soldier's pouch!—Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon!—You ha'n't the valor of a grasshopper.

David. Well, I say no more.—'Twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod-Hall!—but I ha' done.—How Phillis will howl when she hears of it!—Aye, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after!—And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honor, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born. [*Whimpering.*

Acres. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight—so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Captain Absolute, sir.

Acres. O! show him up. [*Exit* Servant.

David. Well, Heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

Acres. What's that!—Don't provoke me, David!

David. Good bye, Master. [*Whimpering.*

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven. [*Exit* David.

Enter Absolute.

Abs. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead!—If I hadn't the valor of St. George and the dragon to boot——

Abs. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. O!—There——

[*Gives him the challenge.*

Abs. "*To Ensign Beverley.*" So—what's going on now? [*Aside*]—Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Abs. Indeed!—Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad, but I will, Jack.—Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage—and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Abs. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal *defiance.*

Abs. Well, give it to me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Abs. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it.—No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend!—You couldn't be my second—could you, Jack?

Abs. Why no, Bob—not in *this* affair—it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well then, I must fix on my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack.

Abs. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the Captain.

Abs. I'll come instantly.—Well, my little hero, success attend you. [*Going.*

Acres. Stay — stay, Jack. — If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

Abs. To be sure I shall.—I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

Acres. Aye, do, do—and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week—will you, Jack?

Abs. I will, I will; I'll say you are called in the country "*Fighting Bob!*"

Acres. Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life if I clear my honor.

Abs. No!—that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wish me to kill him—do you, Jack?

Abs. No, upon my soul, I do not.—But a devil of a fellow, hey? [*Going.*

Acres. True, true.—But stay—stay, Jack—you may add that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage!

Abs. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

Abs. Aye, aye, "*Fighting Bob!*"

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II

Mrs. Malaprop's *Lodgings.*

Mrs. Malaprop *and* Lydia.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to him?—Isn't he a

handsome man?—tell me that.—A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lyd. She little thinks whom she is praising! [*Aside*]—So is Beverley, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. No caparisons, miss, if you please!—Caparisons don't become a young woman.—No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman!

Lyd. Aye, the Captain Absolute *you* have seen. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Then he's *so* well bred;—*so* full of alacrity, and adulation!—and has *so much* to say for himself:—in such good language, too!—His physiognomy so grammatical!—Then his presence is so noble!—I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—"Hesperian curls!—the front of *Job* himself!—An eye, like *March*, to threaten at command!—A station, like Harry Mercury, new—" something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged she'll be presently when she discovers her mistake! [*Aside.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Show them up here.

[*Exit* Servant.

Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman.—Show your good breeding at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my resolution;—I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to, or look at him.

[*Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door.*

Enter Sir Anthony *and* Absolute.

Sir Anth. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop, come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow.—I don't know what's the matter; but if I hadn't held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. Mal. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause!—Lydia, Lydia, rise, I beseech you!—pay your respects! [*Aside to her.*

Sir Anth. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice, and *my* alliance.—Now, Jack, speak to her! [*Aside to him.*

Abs. What the d—l shall I do! [*Aside*]—You see, sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here.—I knew she wouldn't!—I told you so.—Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together!

[Absolute *seems to expostulate with his Father.*

Lyd. [*Aside*] I wonder I ha'n't heard my aunt exclaim yet! Sure she can't have looked at him!—Perhaps their regimentals are alike, and she is something blind.

Sir Anth. I say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet!

Mrs. Mal. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small.—Turn round, Lydia, I blush for you! [*Aside to her.*

Sir Anth. May I not flatter myself that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son!—Why don't you begin, Jack?—Speak, you puppy—speak! [*Aside to him.*

Mrs. Mal. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any.—She will not *say* she has.—Answer, hussy! why don't you answer? [*Aside to her.*

Sir Anth. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness.—Z—ds! sirrah! why don't you speak? [*Aside to him.*

Lyd. [*Aside*] I think my lover seems as little inclined to conversation as myself.—How strangely blind my Aunt is!

Abs. Hem! hem!—madam—hem!—[Absolute *attempts to speak, then returns to* Sir Anthony]—Faith! sir, I am so confounded!—and so—so—confused!—I told you I should be so, sir,—I knew it.—The—the—tremor of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir Anth. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it?—Go up, and speak to her directly!

[Abs. *makes signs to* Mrs. Mal. *to leave them together.*

Mrs. Mal. Sir Anthony, shall we leave them together?—Ah! you stubborn little vixen! [*Aside to her.*

Sir Anth. Not yet, ma'am, not yet! What the d—l are you at? Unlock your jaws, sirrah, or—— [*Aside to him.*

Absolute *draws near* Lydia.

Abs. [*Aside*] Now Heaven send she may be too sullen to look round!—I must disguise my voice.—

[*Speaks in a low hoarse tone.*

——Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love?—Will not——

Sir Anth. What the d—l ails the fellow?—Why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

Abs. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my—my modesty quite choke me!

Sir Anth. Ah! your *modesty* again!—I'll tell you what, Jack, if you don't speak out

directly, and glibly, too, I shall be in such a rage!—Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favor us with something more than a side-front!

[Mrs. Malaprop *seems to chide* Lydia.

Abs. [*Aside*] So!—All will out I see!

[*Goes up to* Lydia, *speaks softly.* Be not surprised, my Lydia; suppress all surprise at present.

Lyd. [*Aside*] Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice!—Sure he can't have imposed on Sir Anthony, too!—

[*Looks round by degrees, then starts up.* Is this possible!—my Beverley!—how can this be?—my Beverley?

Abs. Ah! 'tis all over. [*Aside.*

Sir Anth. Beverley!—the devil!—Beverley!—What can the girl mean?—This is my son, Jack Absolute!

Mrs. Mal. For shame, hussy! for shame!—your head runs so on that fellow that you have him always in your eyes!—Beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly.

Lyd. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

Sir Anth. Z—ds! the girl's mad!—her brain's turned by reading!

Mrs. Mal. O' my conscience, I believe so!—What do you mean by Beverley, hussy?—You saw Captain Absolute before to-day; there he is—your husband that shall be.

Lyd. With all my soul, ma'am.—When I refuse my Beverley——

Sir Anth. O! she's as mad as Bedlam!—Or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick!—Come here, sirrah!—who the d—l are you?

Abs. Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavor to recollect.

Sir Anth. Are you my son, or not?—answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Mrs. Mal. Aye, sir, who are you? O mercy! I begin to suspect!——

Abs. Ye Powers of Impudence befriend me! [*Aside*] Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be *yours* also, I hope my duty has always shown.—Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer—and shall be proud to add *affectionate nephew.*—I need not tell my Lydia, that she sees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name, and a station which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lyd. [*Sullenly*] So!—there will be no elopement after all!

Sir Anth. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! To do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Abs. O you flatter me, sir—you compliment—'tis my *modesty* you know, sir—my *modesty* that has stood in my way.

Sir Anth. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however!—I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am.——So this was your *penitence,* your *duty,* and *obedience!*—I thought it was d—ned sudden!—You *never heard their names before,* not you!—*What, Languishes of Worcestershire,* hey?—*if you could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired!*—Ah! you dissembling villain!—What!—[*Pointing to* Lydia] *she squints, don't she?—a little red-haired girl!*—hey?—Why, you hypoc'rical young rascal!—I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head!

Abs. 'Tis with difficulty, sir.—I *am* confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me!—Hey! how! what! Captain, did *you* write the letters then?—What!—I am to thank *you* for the elegant compilation of *"an old weather-beaten she-dragon"*—hey?—O mercy! was it *you* that reflected on my parts of speech?

Abs. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last, if you don't assist me.—I shall certainly not be able to stand it!

Sir Anth. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive.—Odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humored! and so gallant!—hey! Mrs. Malaprop!

Mrs. Mal. Well, Sir Anthony, since *you* desire it, we will not anticipate the past;—so mind, young people—our retrospection will now be all to the future.

Sir Anth. Come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant! [*Aside*]—Jack—isn't the *cheek* as I said, hey?—and the eye, you dog!—and the lip—hey?—Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—theirs is the time of life for happiness!——*"Youth's the season made for joy"*—[*Sings*]—hey!—Odds life! I'm in such spirits,—I don't know what I couldn't do!—Permit me, ma'am—[*Gives his hand to* Mrs. Mal. *Sings*] Tol-de-rol!—'gad, I should like a little fooling myself—Tol-de-rol! de-rol!

[*Exit singing, and handing* Mrs. Mal. Lydia *sits sullenly in her chair.*

Abs. So much thought bodes me no good [*Aside*].—So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Abs. So!—egad! I thought as much!—That d—ned monosyllable has froze me! [*Aside*]—What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our *friends' consent,* as in our mutual vows——

Lyd. *Friends' consent,* indeed! [*Peevishly.*

Abs. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little *wealth* and *comfort* may be endured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as——

Lyd. *Lawyers!*—I *hate* lawyers!

Abs. Nay then, we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the licence, and——

Lyd. The *licence!*—I *hate* licence!

Abs. Oh my love! *be* not so unkind!—Thus let me intreat—— [*Kneeling.*

Lyd. Pshaw!—what signifies kneeling when you know I *must* have you?

Abs. [*Rising*] Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you.—If I have lost your *heart,*—I resign the rest.—'Gad, I must try what a little *spirit* will do. [*Aside.*

Lyd. [*Rising*] Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating *me* like a *child!*—humoring my romance! and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

Abs. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me.—Only hear——

Lyd. So, while *I* fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them *all*—behold! my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation!—and *I* am *myself* the only dupe at last! [*Walking about in heat.*

Abs. Nay, but hear me——

Lyd. No, sir, you could not think that such paltry artifices could please me, when the mask was thrown off!—But I suppose since your tricks have made you secure of my *fortune,* you are little solicitous about my *affections.*—But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! [*Taking a miniature from her bosom*] which I have worn, night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There, sir [*Flings it to him*]—and be assured I throw the original from my heart as easily!

Abs. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that.—Here [*Taking out a picture*], *here* is Miss Lydia Languish.—What a difference!—Aye, *there* is the heavenly assenting smile that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar!—and *there,* the *half* resentful blush that *would* have checked the ardor of my thanks.—Well, all that's past!—all over indeed!—There, madam—in *beauty,* that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I cannot find in my heart to *part with* it. [*Puts it up again.*

Lyd. [*Softening*] 'Tis *your own* doing, sir.—I—I—I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

Abs. O, most certainly.—Sure now this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha! ha!—There's some spirit in *this!*—What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises, half an hundred vows, under one's hand, with the marks of a dozen or two angels to witness!—all that's of no consequence, you know.—To be sure people will say, that miss didn't know her own mind—but never mind that:—or perhaps they may be ill-natured enough to hint that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There's no bearing his insolence. [*Bursts into tears.*

Enter MRS. MALAPROP *and* SIR ANTHONY.

Mrs. Mal. [*Entering*] Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing a while.

Lyd. *This* is *worse* than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! [*Sobbing.*

Sir Anth. What the devil's the matter now!—Z—ds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the *oddest billing* and *cooing* I ever heard!—But what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I'm quite astonished!

Abs. Ask the lady, sir.

Mrs. Mal. O mercy!—I'm quite analysed, for my part!—Why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lyd. Ask the *gentleman,* ma'am.

Sir Anth. Z—ds! I shall be in a frenzy!—Why, Jack, you scoundrel, you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

Mrs. Mal. Aye, sir, there's no more *trick,* is there?—You are not like Cerberus, *three* gentlemen at once, are you?

Abs. You'll not let me speak.—I say the *lady* can account for *this* much better than I can.

Lyd. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—*there* is the man—I now obey you:—for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever. [*Exit* LYDIA.

Mrs. Mal. O mercy! and miracles! what a turn here is!—Why sure, Captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

Sir Anth. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Abs. Nay, sir, upon my word——

Sir Anth. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure *'twas* so.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony!—O fie, Captain!

Abs. Upon my soul, ma'am——

Sir Anth. Come, no excuses, Jack;—why, your father, you rogue, was so before you:—the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.—Ha! ha! ha! poor little Lydia!—

Why, you've frightened her, you dog, you have.

Abs. By all that's good, sir——

Sir Anth. Z—ds! say no more, I tell you.—Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace.—You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop;—you must tell her 'tis Jack's way—tell her 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family!—Come, get on, Jack—ha! ha! ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain!

[*Pushing him out.*

Mrs. Mal. O! Sir Anthony!—O fie, Captain! [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene III

The North Parade.

Enter Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Sir Luc. I wonder where this Capt. Absolute hides himself.—Upon my conscience!—these officers are always in one's way in love-affairs.—I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me!—And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in 'em, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth.—Hah!—isn't this the Captain coming?—faith it is!—There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow that is mighty provoking!—Who the devil is he talking to?

[*Steps aside.*

Enter Capt. Absolute.

Abs. To what fine purpose I have been plotting! A noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul!—A little gypsy!—I did not think her romance could have made her so d—ned absurd either.—'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humor in my life!—I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir Luc. O, faith! I'm in the luck of it—I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure I'm just come in the nick! Now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. [Sir Lucius *goes up to* Absolute]——With regard to that matter, Captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Abs. Upon my word then, you must be a very subtle disputant:—because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir Luc. That's no reason.—For give me leave to tell you, a man may *think* an untruth as well as *speak* one.

Abs. Very true, sir, but if a man never utters his thoughts I should think they *might* stand a *chance* of escaping controversy.

Sir Luc. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Abs. Hark'ee, Sir Lucius,—if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview:—for what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir Luc. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension.—[*Bowing*]—You have named the very thing I would be at.

Abs. Very well, sir—I shall certainly not baulk your inclinations—but I should be glad you would please to explain your motives.

Sir Luc. Pray, sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands—we should only spoil it by trying to explain it.—However, your memory is very short—or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week.—So no more, but name your time and place.

Abs. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better;—let it be this evening—here, by the Spring-Gardens.—We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir Luc. Faith! that same interruption in affairs of this nature shows very great ill-breeding.—I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness.—However, if it's the same to you, Captain, I should take it as a particular kindness if you'd let us meet in King's Mead-Fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may dispatch both matters at once.

Abs. 'Tis the same to me exactly.—A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir Luc. If you please, sir, there will be very pretty small-sword light, tho' it won't do for a long shot. So that matter's settled! and my mind's at ease! [*Exit* Sir Lucius.

Enter Faulkland, *meeting* Absolute.

Abs. Well met.—I was going to look for you.—O, Faulkland! all the dæmons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vexed that if I had not the prospect of a resource in being knocked on the head by and by, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

Faulk. What can you mean?—Has Lydia changed her mind?—I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

Abs. Aye, just as the eyes do of a person who squints:—when her *love-eye* was fixed on *me*—t'other—her *eye* of *duty*, was finely obliqued:—but when duty bid her point *that* the same way—off t'other turned on a swivel, and secured its retreat with a frown!

Faulk. But what's the resource you——

Abs. O, to wind up the whole, a good-natured Irishman here has—[*Mimicking* SIR LUCIUS]—begged leave to have the pleasure of cutting my throat—and I mean to indulge him—that's all.

Faulk. Prithee, be serious.

Abs. 'Tis fact, upon my soul.—Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by sight—for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock.—'Tis on that account I wished to see you—you must go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure.—Sir Lucius shall explain himself—and I dare say matters may be accommodated.—But this evening, did you say?—I wish it had been any other time.

Abs. Why?—there will be light enough:—there will (as Sir Lucius says) "be very pretty small-sword light, tho' it won't do for a long shot."—Confound his long shots!

Faulk. But I am myself a good deal ruffled by a difference I have had with Julia—my vile tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

Abs. By Heavens, Faulkland, you don't deserve her.

Enter SERVANT, *gives* FAULKLAND *a letter.*

Faulk. O Jack! this is from Julia.—I dread to open it.—I fear it may be to take a last leave—perhaps to bid me return her letters—and restore——O! how I suffer for my folly!

Abs. Here—let me see. [*Takes the letter and opens it*] Aye, a final sentence indeed!—'tis all over with you, faith!

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't keep me in suspense.

Abs. Hear then.—"*As I am convinced that my dear* FAULKLAND'S *own reflections have already upbraided him for his last unkindness to me, I will not add a word on the subject.—I wish to speak with you as soon as possible.—Yours ever and truly,* JULIA."—There's stubbornness and resentment for you! [*Gives him the letter*] Why, man, you don't seem one whit happier at this.

Faulk. O, yes, I am—but—but——

Abs. Confound your *buts*.—You never hear any thing that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately d—n it with a *but*.

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly—don't you think there is something forward—something indelicate in this haste to forgive?—Women should never sue for reconciliation:—*that* should *always* come from us.—*They* should retain their coldness till *wooed* to kindness—and their *pardon*, like their *love*, should "not unsought be won."

Abs. I have not patience to listen to you:—thou'rt incorrigible!—so say no more on the subject.—I must go to settle a few matters.—Let me see you before six—remember—at my lodgings.—A poor industrious devil like me, who have toiled, and drudged, and plotted to gain my ends, and am at last disappointed by other people's folly—may in pity be allowed to swear and grumble a little;—but a captious sceptic in love,—a slave to fretfulness and whim—who has no difficulties but of *his own* creating—is a subject more fit for ridicule than compassion! [*Exit* ABSOLUTE.

Faulk. I feel his reproaches!—yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety for the gross content with which *he* tramples on the thorns of love.—His engaging me in this duel has started an idea in my head, which I will instantly pursue.—I'll use it as the touchstone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness.—If her love prove pure and sterling ore—my name will rest on it with honor!—and once I've stamped it there, I lay aside my doubts for ever:—but if the dross of selfishness, the allay of pride predominate—'twill be best to leave her as a toy for some less cautious fool to sigh for. [*Exit* FAULKLAND.

ACT V

SCENE I

JULIA'S *Dressing-Room.*

JULIA, *sola.*

Jul. How this message has alarmed me! What dreadful accident can he mean! why such charge to be alone?—O Faulkland!—how many unhappy moments!—how many tears have you cost me!

Enter FAULKLAND, *muffled up in a riding-coat.*

Jul. What means this?—why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas! Julia, I am come to take a long farewell.

Jul. Heavens! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch, whose life is forfeited.—Nay, start not!—the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me.—I left you fretful and pas-

sionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly.—O Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment! —But no more of that—your heart and promise were given to one happy in friends, character and station! they are not bound to wait upon a solitary, guilty exile.

Jul. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the *nature* of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought that I could *now* chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love.—My heart has long known no other guardian.—I now entrust my person to your honor—we will fly together.—When safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled—and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and tenderest comforter. Then on the bosom of your wedded Julia, you may lull your keen regret to slumbering; while virtuous love, with a cherub's hand, shall smooth the brow of upbraiding thought, and pluck the thorn from compunction.

Faulk. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude! But the time is so pressing, it calls on you for so hasty a resolution—would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you beside his solitary love?

Jul. I ask not a moment.—No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself: and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love.—But let us not linger.—Perhaps this delay——

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark.—Yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

Jul. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act.—I know not whether 'tis so—but sure that alone can never make us unhappy.—The little I have will be sufficient to *support* us; and *exile* never should be splendid.

Faulk. Aye, but in such an abject state of life my wounded pride perhaps may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure. Perhaps the recollection of a deed my conscience cannot justify, may haunt me in such gloomy and unsocial fits, that I shall hate the tenderness that would relieve me, break from your arms, and quarrel with your fondness!

Jul. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you:—one who, by bearing *your* infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you *so* to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. O Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

Jul. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended; yet in pity, Julia, do not kill me with resenting a fault which never can be repeated: but sealing, this once, my pardon, let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and monitress, and expiate my past folly by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland!—That you are free from a crime which I before feared to name, Heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice!—These are tears of thankfulness for that! But that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express!

Faulk. By Heavens! Julia——

Jul. Yet hear me.—My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me; in his presence I pledged my hand—*joyfully* pledged it—where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer without a pause my grateful duty, as well as my affection: hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another.—I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.——

Faulk. I confess it all! yet hear——

Jul. After such a year of trial—I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! A trick of such a nature as to show me plainly that when I thought you loved me best, you even then regarded me as a mean dissembler; an artful, prudent hypocrite.

Faulk. Never! never!

Jul. I now see it is not in your nature to be content or confident in love. With this conviction—I never will be yours. While I had hopes that my persevering attention and unreproaching kindness might in time reform your temper, I should have been happy to have gained a dearer influence over you; but I will not furnish you with a licensed power to keep alive an incor-

rigible fault, at the expense of one who never would contend with you.

Faulk. Nay, but Julia, by my soul and honor, if after this——

Jul. But one word more.—As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another.—I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity; and the dearest blessing I can ask of Heaven to send you will be to charm you from that unhappy temper which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement.—All I request of *you* is that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity, and when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of—let it not be your *least* regret that it lost you the love of one—who would have followed you in beggary through the world! [*Exit.*

Faulk. She's gone!—for ever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner, that riveted me to my place.—O fool!—dolt!—barbarian!—Curst as I am with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind Fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side!—I must now haste to my appointment.—Well, my mind is tuned for such a scene.—I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here.—O love! — tormentor! — fiend!—whose influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! [*Exit.*

Enter Maid *and* Lydia.

Maid. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here just now—perhaps she is only in the next room. [*Exit* Maid.

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

Enter Julia.

Lyd. O Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation.—Lud! child, what's the matter with you?—You have been crying!—I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Jul. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness.—Something *has* flurried me a little.—Nothing that you can guess at.—[*Aside*] I would not accuse Faulkland to a sister!

Lyd. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them.—You know who Beverley proves to be?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair. Had young Absolute been the person you took him for, I should not have accepted your confidence on the subject without a serious endeavor to counteract your caprice.

Lyd. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one!—But I don't care—I'll never have him.

Jul. Nay, Lydia——

Lyd. Why, is it not provoking; when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last!—There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements!—so becoming a disguise!—so amiable a ladder of ropes!—Conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop—and such paragraphs in the news-papers!—O, I shall die with disappointment!

Jul. I don't wonder at it!

Lyd. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect, but, after a deal of flimsy preparation, with a bishop's licence, and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country-church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, *spinster!* O, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

Jul. Melancholy, indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying to remember the dear delicious shifts I used to be put to to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow!—How often have I stole forth in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue!—There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically! he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension! And while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardor!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love!

Jul. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you: but it suits more the situation of my mind, at present, earnestly to entreat you not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your *caprice,* which I know too well caprice can inflict.

Lyd. O Lud! what has brought my aunt here!

Enter Mrs. Malaprop, Fag, *and* David.

Mrs. Mal. So! so! here's fine work!—here's fine suicide, paracide, and salivation going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

Jul. For Heaven's sake, madam, what's the meaning of this?

Mrs. Mal. That gentleman can tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lyd. Do, sir, will you, inform us.

[*To* Fag.

Fag. Ma'am, I should hold myself very deficient in every requisite that forms the man of breeding if I delayed a moment to give all the information in my power to a lady so deeply interested in the affair as you are.

Lyd. But quick! quick, sir!

Fag. True, ma'am, as you say, one should be quick in divulging matters of this nature; for should we be tedious, perhaps while we are flourishing on the subject two or three lives may be lost!

Lyd. O patience! — Do, ma'am, for Heaven's sake! tell us what is the matter!

Mrs. Mal. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter! —But he can tell you the perpendiculars.

Lyd. Then, prythee, sir be brief.

Fag. Why then, ma'am—as to murder—I cannot take upon me to say—and as to slaughter, or man-slaughter, that will be as the jury finds it.

Lyd. But who, sir—who are engaged in this?

Fag. Faith, ma'am, one is a young gentleman whom I should be very sorry anything was to happen to—a very pretty behaved gentleman!—We have lived much together, and always on terms.

Lyd. But who is this? who! who! who!

Fag. My master, ma'am—my master—I speak of my master.

Lyd. Heavens! What, Captain Absolute!

Mrs. Mal. O, to be sure, you are frightened now!

Jul. But who are with him, sir?

Fag. As to the rest, ma'am, his gentleman can inform you better than I.

Jul. Do speak, friend. [*To* David.

David. Look'ee, my lady—by the Mass! there's mischief going on.—Folks don't use to meet for amusement with fire-arms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers besides!—This, my lady, I say, has an angry favor.

Jul. But who is there beside Captain Absolute, friend?

David. My poor master—under favor, for mentioning him first.—You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master, of course, is, or *was,* Squire Acres.—Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Jul. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavor to prevent mischief.

Mrs. Mal. O fie—it would be very inelegant in us:—we should only participate things.

David. Ah! do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives.—They are desperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that blood-thirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger!—O mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape?—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrefactions!

Lyd. What are we to do, madam?

Mrs. Mal. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief.—Here, friend—you can show us the place?

Fag. If you please, ma'am, I will conduct you.—David, do you look for Sir Anthony. [*Exit* David.

Mrs. Mal. Come, girls!—this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, sir, you're our envoy —lead the way, and we'll precede.

Fag. Not a step before the ladies for the world!

Mrs. Mal. You're sure you know the spot?

Fag. I think I can find it, ma'am; and one good thing is we shall hear the report of the pistols as we draw near, so we can't well miss them: never fear, ma'am, never fear. [*Exeunt, he talking.*

Scene II

South Parade.

Enter Absolute, *putting his sword under his great-coat.*

Abs. A sword seen in the streets of Bath would raise as great an alarm as a mad-dog. How provoking this is in Faulkland!—never punctual! I shall be obliged to go without him at last.—O, the devil! here's Sir Anthony!——How shall I escape him?

[*Muffles up his face, and takes a circle to go off.*

Enter Sir Anthony.

Sir Anth. How one may be deceived at a little distance! Only that I see he don't know me, I could have sworn that was Jack!—Hey!—'Gad's life! it is.—Why, Jack, you dog!—what are you afraid of?—hey!—sure I'm right.—Why, Jack!—Jack Absolute! [*Goes up to him.*

Abs. Really, sir, you have the advantage of me:—I don't remember ever to have had the honor——my name is Saunderson, at your service.

Sir Anth. Sir, I beg your pardon—I took you—hey!—why, z—ds! it is——stay—— [*Looks up to his face*]—So, so—your humble servant, Mr. Saunderson!—Why, you scoundrel, what tricks are you after now?

Abs. O, a joke, sir, a joke!—I came here on purpose to look for you, sir.

Sir Anth. You did! Well, I am glad you were so lucky.—But what are you muffled up so for?—what's this for?—hey?

Abs. 'Tis cool, sir; isn't it?—rather chilly, somehow?—But I shall be late—I have a particular engagement.

Sir Anth. Stay.—Why, I thought you were looking for me?—Pray, Jack, where is't you are going?

Abs. Going, sir!

Sir Anth. Aye—where are you going?

Abs. Where am I going?

Sir Anth. You unmannerly puppy!

Abs. I was going, sir, to—to—to—to Lydia—sir, to Lydia—to make matters up if I could;—and I was looking for you, sir, to—to——

Sir Anth. To go with you, I suppose.—Well, come along.

Abs. O! z—ds! no, sir, not for the world!—I wished to meet with you, sir,—to—to—to—— You find it cool, I'm sure, sir—you'd better not stay out.

Sir Anth. Cool!—not at all.—Well, Jack—and what will you say to Lydia?

Abs. O, sir, beg her pardon, humor her—promise and vow:—but I detain you, sir—consider the cold air on your gout.

Sir Anth. O, not at all!—not at all!—I'm in no hurry.—Ah! Jack, you youngsters, when once you are wounded here—[*Putting his hand to* Absolute's *breast*] Hey! what the deuce have you got here?

Abs. Nothing, sir—nothing.

Sir Anth. What's this?—Here's something d—d hard!

Abs. O, trinkets, sir! trinkets—a bauble for Lydia!

Sir Anth. Nay, let me see your taste. [*Pulls his coat open, the swords falls*] Trinkets!—a bauble for Lydia!—z—ds! sirrah, you are not going to cut her throat, are you?

Abs. Ha! ha! ha!—I thought it would divert you, sir; tho' I didn't mean to tell you till afterwards.

Sir Anth. You didn't?—Yes, this is a very diverting trinket, truly!

Abs. Sir, I'll explain to you.—You know, sir, Lydia is romantic—devilish romantic, and very absurd of course.—Now, sir, I intend, if she refuses to forgive me—to unsheathe this sword—and swear—I'll fall upon its point, and expire at her feet!

Sir Anth. Fall upon fiddle-stick's end!—why, I suppose it is the very thing that would please her.—Get along, you fool.—

Abs. Well, sir, you shall hear of my success—you shall hear.—"O Lydia!—forgive me, or this pointed steel"—says I.

Sir Anth. "O, booby! stab away and welcome"—says she.—Get along!—and d—n your trinkets! [*Exit* Absolute.

Enter David *running.*

Dav. Stop him! Stop him! Murder! Thief! Fire!—Stop fire! Stop fire!—O! Sir Anthony—Call! Call! Bid 'em stop! Murder! Fire!

Sir Anth. Fire! Murder! Where?

Dav. Oons! he's out of sight! and I'm out of breath for my part! O, Sir Anthony, why didn't you stop him? why didn't you stop him?

Sir Anth. Z—ds! the fellow's mad!—Stop whom? Stop Jack?

Dav. Aye, the Captain, Sir!—There's murder and slaughter——

Sir Anth. Murder!

Dav. Aye, please you, Sir Anthony, there's all kinds of murder, all sorts of slaughter to be seen in the fields: there's fighting going on, sir—bloody sword-and-gun fighting!

Sir Anth. Who are going to fight, dunce?

Dav. Every body that I know of, Sir Anthony:—every body is going to fight; my poor master, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, your son, the Captain——

Sir Anth. O, the dog!—I see his tricks.—Do you know the place?

Dav. King's Mead-Fields.

Sir Anth. You know the way?

Dav. Not an inch;—but I'll call the mayor — aldermen — constables — churchwardens—and beadles.—We can't be too many to part them.

Sir Anth. Come along.—Give me your shoulder! We'll get assistance as we go.—The lying villain!—Well, I shall be in such a frenzy!—So—this was the history of his d—d trinkets! I'll bauble him! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

King's Mead-Fields.

Sir Lucius *and* Acres, *with pistols.*

Acres. By my valor! then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance.—Odds levels and aims!—I say it is a good distance.

Sir Luc. Is it for muskets or small field-pieces? Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave those things to me.—Stay now—I'll show you.—[*Measures paces along the stage*] There now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Z—ds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box!—I'll tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir Luc. Faith! then I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius—but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards——

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! nonsense! Three or

four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no!—By my valor! there is no merit in killing him so near.—Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot:—a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me!

Sir Luc. Well—the gentleman's friend and I must settle that.—But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I don't understand——

Sir Luc. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and if an unlucky bullet should carry a *quietus* with it—I say it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A *quietus!*

Sir Luc. For instance, now—if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

Sir Luc. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir Luc. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being used to a thing.—Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files!—I've practised that.—There, Sir Lucius—there [*Puts himself in an attitude*]——a side-front, hey?—Odd! I'll make myself small enough:—I'll stand edgeways.

Sir Luc. Now—you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim——

[*Levelling at him.*

Acres. Z—ds! Sir Lucius—are you sure it is not cocked?

Sir Luc. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir Luc. Pho! be easy.—Well, now if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance—for if it misses a vital part of your right side—'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left!

Acres. A vital part! O, my poor vitals!

Sir Luc. But, there—fix yourself so.—[*Placing him*] Let him see the broad side of your full front.—There.—Now a ball or two may pass clean thro' your body, and never do any harm at all.

Acres. Clean thro' me!—a ball or two clean thro' me!

Sir Luc. Aye—may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Look'ee! Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valor! I will stand edge-ways.

Sir Luc. [*Looking at his watch*] Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—hah?—No, faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Hey!—What!—Coming!——

Sir Luc. Aye.—Who are those yonder getting over the stile?

Acres. There are two of them indeed!—Well—let them come—hey, Sir Lucius? we—we—we—we—won't run.—

Sir Luc. Run!

Acres. No—I say—we *won't* run, by my valor!

Sir Luc. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing—nothing—my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but—I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow—as I did.

Sir Luc. O fie!—consider your honor.

Acres. Aye — true — my honor. — Do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two every now and then about my honor.

Sir Luc. Well, here they're coming.

[*Looking.*

Acres. Sir Lucius—if I wa'n't with you, I should almost think I was afraid.—If my valor should leave me!—Valor will come and go.

Sir Luc. Then, pray, keep it fast while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going.—Yes—my valor is certainly going!—It is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands!

Sir Luc. Your honor—your honor.—Here they are.

Acres. O mercy!—now—that I were safe at *Clod-Hall!* or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND *and* ABSOLUTE.

Sir Luc. Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah!—what—Captain Absolute!—So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account.

Acres. What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

Abs. Hark'ee, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir Luc. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly.—So Mr. Beverley [*to* FAULKLAND], if you'll choose your weapons, the Captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, sir!

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland. These are my particular friends.

Sir Luc. What, sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir Luc. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party by sitting out.

Abs. O pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter——

Acres. No, no, Mr. Faulkland—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian.—Look'ee, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir Luc. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody—and you came here to fight him.—Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him—I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Z—ds, Sir Lucius—I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face! If *he* were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!——

Abs. Hold, Bob—let me set you right.—There is no such man as Beverley in the case.—The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir Luc. Well, this is lucky!—Now you have an opportunity——

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend Jack Absolute?—Not if he were fifty Beverleys! Z—ds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me be so unnatural.

Sir Luc. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valor has *oozed* away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the least! Odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a *quietus,* you may command me entirely. I'll get you a *snug lying* in the *Abbey here;* or *pickle* you, and send you over to Blunderbuss-hall, or any thing of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a *coward;* coward was the word, by my valor!

Sir Luc. Well, sir?

Acres. Look'ee, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word coward.—*Coward* may be said in joke.—But if you had called me a *poltroon,* odds daggers and balls!——

Sir Luc. Well, sir?

Acres. ——I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir Luc. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Abs. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres.—He is a most *determined dog*—called in the country, *Fighting Bob.*—He generally *kills a man a week;* don't you, Bob?

Acres. Aye—at home!

Sir Luc. Well then, Captain, 'tis we must begin.—So come out, my little counsellor [*Draws his sword*], and ask the gentleman, whether he will resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him.

Abs. Come on then, sir; [*Draws*] since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's *my reply.*

Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, *and the Women.*

David. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behavior!

Sir Anth. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy.—How came you in a duel, sir?

Abs. Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his Majesty.

Sir Anth. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his Majesty!—Z—ds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

Abs. Sir, I tell you! That gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons.

Sir Anth. Gad! sir, how came you to call my son out without explaining your reasons?

Sir Luc. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honor could not brook.

Sir Anth. Z—ds! Jack, how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honor could not brook?

Mrs. Mal. Come, come, let's have no honor before ladies.—Captain Absolute, come here.—How could you intimidate us so?—Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Abs. For fear I should be killed, or escape, ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Nay, no delusions to the past.—Lydia is convinced.—Speak, child.

Sir Luc. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here.—I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence.—Now mark——

Lyd. What is it you mean, sir?

Sir Luc. Come, come, Delia, we must be serious now—this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Abs. O! my little angel, say you so?—Sir Lucius—I perceive there must be some mistake here.—With regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you—I can only say that it could not have been in-

tentional.—And as you must be convinced that I should not fear to support a real injury—you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency.—I ask your pardon.—But for this lady, while honored with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir Anth. Well said, Jack! and I'll stand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to anything in the world—and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valor! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir Luc. Captain, give me your hand.—An affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation.—And as for the lady—if she chooses to deny her own hand-writing here—— [*Taking out letters.*

Mrs. Mal. O, he will dissolve my mystery!—Sir Lucius, perhaps there's some mistake—perhaps, I can illuminate——

Sir Luc. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business.—Miss Languish, are you my Delia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

[Lydia *and* Absolute *walk aside.*

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment.—Pardon my blushes, I am Delia.

Sir Luc. You Delia!—pho! pho! be easy.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke!—those letters are mine.—When you are more sensible of my benignity—perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir Luc. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you.—And to show you I'm not ungrateful—Captain Absolute! since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

Abs. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's our friend, Fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir Luc. Hah! little Valor—here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds wrinkles! No.—But give us your hand, Sir Lucius; forget and forgive. But if ever I give you a chance of *pickling* me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

Sir Anth. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. Mal. O Sir Anthony!—men are all barbarians——

[*All retire but* Julia *and* Faulkland.

Jul. [*Aside*] He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen.—There was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me.—O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet Hope is the child of Penitence.

Jul. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

Faulk. Now I shall be blest indeed!

[Sir Anthony *comes forward.*

Sir Anth. What's going on here?—So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland seemed to proceed from what he calls the *delicacy* and *warmth* of his affection for you.—There, marry him directly, Julia. You'll find he'll mend surprisingly!

[*The rest come forward.*

Sir Luc. Come now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better——

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius.—So, Jack, I wish you joy.—Mr. Faulkland the same.—Ladies,—come now, to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on you all meeting me there.

Sir Anth. Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine, for having, by her gentleness and candor, reformed the unhappy temper of one who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

Abs. Well, Faulkland, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets, of love—with this difference only, that *you* always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while *I*——

Lyd. Was always obliged to *me* for it, hey, Mr. Modesty?——But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

Jul. Then let us study to preserve it so; and while Hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future Bliss, let us deny its pencil those colors which are too bright to be lasting.—When Hearts deserving Happiness would unite their fortunes, Virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging

Passion will force the gaudier Rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them, when its leaves are dropt! [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE

BY THE AUTHOR.

Spoken by MRS. BULKLEY.

Ladies, for *you*—I heard our poet say—
He'd try to coax some *moral* from his play:
One moral's plain—cried I—without more fuss;
Man's social happiness all rests on us—
Thro' all the drama—whether d—ned or not—
Love gilds the *scene,* and *women* guide the *plot.*
From every rank—obedience is our due—
D'ye doubt?—The world's great stage shall prove it true.
The cit—well skilled to shun domestic strife—
Will sup abroad;—but first—he'll ask his *wife:*
John Trot, his friend—for once, will do the same,
But then—he'll just *step home to tell my dame.*—
The *surly 'Squire*—at noon resolves to rule,
And half the day—zounds! madam is a fool!
Convinced at night—the vanquished victor says,
Ah! Kate! *you women have such coaxing ways!*—
The *jolly toper* chides each tardy blade,—
Till reeling Bacchus calls on love for aid:
Then with each toast, he sees fair bumpers swim,
And kisses Chloe on the sparkling brim!
Nay, I have heard that statesmen—great and wise—
Will *sometimes* counsel with a lady's eyes;
The servile suitors—watch her various face,
She smiles preferment—or she frowns disgrace,
Curtsies a pension here—there nods a place.
Nor with less awe, in scenes of humbler life,
Is *viewed* the *mistress,* or is *heard* the *wife.*
The poorest peasant of the poorest soil,
The child of poverty, and heir to toil—
Early from radiant love's impartial light,
Steals one small spark, to cheer his world of night:
Dear spark!—that oft thro' winter's chilling woes,
Is all the warmth his little cottage knows!
The wand'ring *tar*—who not for *years* has pressed
The widowed partner of his *day* of rest—
On the cold deck—far from her arms removed—
Still hums the ditty which his Susan loved:
And while around the cadence rude is blown,
The boatswain whistles in a softer tone.
The *soldier,* fairly proud of wounds and toil,
Pants for the *triumph* of his Nancy's smile;
But ere the battle should he list' her cries,
The lover trembles—and the hero dies!
That heart, by war and honor steeled to fear,
Droops on a sigh, and sickens at a tear!
But ye more cautious—ye nice judging few,
Who give to beauty only beauty's due,
Tho' friends to love—*ye* view with deep regret
Our conquests marred—our triumphs incomplete,
'Till polished Wit more lasting charms disclose,
And Judgment fix the darts which Beauty throws!
—In female breasts did Sense and Merit rule,
The lover's mind would ask no other school;
Shamed into sense—the scholars of our eyes,
Our Beaux from *gallantry* would soon be wise;
Would gladly light, their homage to improve,
The Lamp of Knowledge at the Torch of Love!

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

PROLOGUE

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK

A SCHOOL for Scandal! tell me, I beseech you,
Needs there a school this modish art to teach you?
No need of lessons now, the knowing think;
We might as well be taught to eat and drink.
Caused by a dearth of scandal, should the vapors
Distress our fair ones—let them read the papers;
Their powerful mixtures such disorders hit;
Crave what you will—there's *quantum sufficit.*
"Lord!" cries my Lady Wormwood (who loves tattle,
And puts much salt and pepper in her prattle),
Just risen at noon, all night at cards when threshing
Strong tea and scandal—"Bless me, how refreshing!
Give me the papers, Lisp—how bold and free! [*Sips.*
Last night Lord L. [*Sips*] *was caught with Lady D.*
For aching heads what charming sal volatile! [*Sips.*
If Mrs. B. will still continue flirting,
We hope she'll DRAW, *or we'll* UNDRAW *the curtain.*
Fine satire, poz—in public all abuse it,
But, by ourselves [*Sips*], our praise we can't refuse it.
Now, Lisp, read you—there, at that dash and star:"
"Yes, ma'am—*A certain lord had best beware,*
Who lives not twenty miles from Grosvenor Square;
For, should he Lady W. find willing,
Wormwood is bitter"——"Oh, that's me! the villain!
Throw it behind the fire, and never more
Let that vile paper come within my door."
Thus at our friends we laugh, who feel the dart;
To reach our feelings, we ourselves must smart.
Is our young bard so young, to think that he
Can stop the full spring-tide of calumny?
Knows he the world so little, and its trade?
Alas! the devil's sooner raised than laid.
So strong, so swift, the monster there's no gagging:

Cut Scandal's head off, still the tongue is wagging.
Proud of your smiles once lavishly bestowed,
Again our young Don Quixote takes the road;
To show his gratitude he draws his pen,
And seeks his hydra, Scandal, in his den.
For your applause all perils he would through—
He'll fight—that's write—a cavalliero true,
Till every drop of blood—that's ink—is spilt for you.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ[1]

SIR PETER TEAZLE.
SIR OLIVER SURFACE.
YOUNG SURFACE.
CHARLES, *his Brother.*
CRABTREE.
SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.
ROWLEY.
SPUNGE.
MOSES.
SNAKE.
CARELESS—*and other companions to* CHARLES.
LADY TEAZLE.
MARIA.
LADY SNEERWELL.
MRS. CANDOUR.
MISS VERJUICE.

ACT I

SCENE I

LADY SNEERWELL'S *House.*

LADY SNEERWELL *at her dressing table with* LAPPET; MISS VERJUICE *drinking chocolate.*

Lady Sneer. **The paragraphs you say were all inserted?**

Verj. **They were, madam—and as I copied them myself in a feigned hand there can be no suspicion whence they came.**

Lady Sneer. **Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?**

Verj. **Madam, by this time Lady Brittle is the talk of half the town—and I doubt not in a week the men will toast her as a demirep.**

Lady Sneer. **What have you done as to the insinuation as to a certain baronet's lady and a certain cook?**

Verj. **That is in as fine a train as your Ladyship could wish. I told the story yesterday to my own maid with directions to communicate it directly to my hairdresser. He, I am informed, has a brother who courts a milliner's prentice in Pallmall, whose mistress has a first cousin whose sister is femme de chambre to Mrs. Clackit—so that in the common course of things it must reach Mrs. Clackit's ears within four-and-twenty hours, and then you know the business is as good as done.**

Lady Sneer. **Why, truly, Mrs. Clackit has a very pretty talent—a great deal of industry—yet—yes—been tolerably successful in her way. To my knowledge she has been the cause of breaking off six matches, of three sons being disinherited and four daughters being turned out of doors, of three several elopements, as many close confinements, nine separate maintenances, and two divorces.—Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a *Tête-à-Tête* in the Town and Country Magazine, when the parties perhaps had never seen each other's faces before in the course of their lives.**

Verj. **She certainly has talents.**

Lady Sneer. **But her manner is gross.**

Verj. **'Tis very true. She generally designs well, has a free tongue, and a bold invention; but her coloring is too dark and her outline often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of tint and mellowness of sneer which distinguish your Ladyship's scandal.**

Lady Sneer. **Ah, you are partial, Verjuice.**

Verj. **Not in the least; everybody allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or a look than many can with the most labored detail even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.**

Lady Sneer. **Yes, my dear Verjuice. I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts.**

[1] From Sheridan's manuscript.

Wounded myself in the early part of my life by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own injured reputation.

Verj. Nothing can be more natural. But, my dear Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

Lady Sneer. I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbor, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family—Lappet.—And has my conduct in this matter really appeared to you so mysterious? [*Exit* Maid.

Verj. Entirely so. An old bachelor as Sir Peter was, having taken a young wife from out of the country—as Lady Teazle is—are certainly fair subjects for a little mischievous raillery; but here are two young men to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death, the eldest possessing the most amiable character and universally well spoken of, the youngest the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character—the former one an avowed admirer of yours and apparently your favorite, the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward—and confessedly beloved by her. Now on the face of these circumstances it is utterly unaccountable to me why you, a young widow with no great jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface, and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

Lady Sneer. Then at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

Verj. No!

Lady Sneer. His real attachment is to Maria or her fortune, but finding in his brother a favored rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions and profit by my assistance.

Verj. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

Lady Sneer. Heavens! how dull you are! cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto thro' shame have concealed even from you—must I confess that Charles—that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation—that he it is for whom I am thus anxious and malicious and to gain whom I would sacrifice—everything?——

Verj. Now indeed, your conduct appears consistent and I no longer wonder at your enmity to Maria; but how came you and Surface so confidential?

Lady Sneer. For our mutual interest; but I have found out him a long time since, altho' he has contrived to deceive everybody beside. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious—while with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

Verj. Yes, yes—I know Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England; and, above all, he praises him as a *man of sentiment.*

Lady Sneer. True, and with the assistance of his sentiments and hypocrisy he has brought Sir Peter entirely in his interests with respect to Maria, and is now, I believe, attempting to flatter Lady Teazle into the same good opinion towards him—while poor Charles has no friend in the house—though I fear he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Serv. Mr. Surface.

Lady Sneer. Show him up. He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people's giving him to me for a lover.

Enter Surface.

Surf. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to-day—your most obedient.

Lady Sneer. Miss Verjuice has just been arraigning me on our mutual attachment now; but I have informed her of our real views and the purposes for which our geniuses at present co-operate. You know how useful she has been to us,—and believe me, the confidence is not ill-placed.

Surf. Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect that a lady of Miss Verjuice's sensibility and discernment——

Lady Sneer. Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress or, what is more material to me, your brother?

Surf. I have not seen either since I saw you, but I can inform you that they are at present at variance; some of your stories have taken good effect on Maria.

Lady Sneer. Ah! my dear Verjuice, the merit of this belongs to you. But do your brother's distresses increase?

Surf. Every hour. I am told he had another execution in his house yesterday; in short his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I have ever heard of.

Lady Sneer. Poor Charles!

Surf. True, madam, notwithstanding his vices one can't help feeling for him; ah, poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it was in my power to be of any essential service to him, for the man who does not share in the distresses of a brother—even though merited by his own misconduct—deserves——

Lady Sneer. O Lud, you are going to be

moral, and forget that you are among friends.

Surf. Egad, that's true—I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter. However, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by a person of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

Verj. 'Twould be a hazardous experiment.

Surf. But, madam, let me caution you to place no more confidence in our friend Snake the libeller; I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward and has never been a friend of mine.

Lady Sneer. I'm not disappointed in Snake; I never suspected the fellow to have virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villany.

Enter Maria.

Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

Maria. O, here is that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's with his odious Uncle Crabtree; so I slipt out and ran hither to avoid them.

Lady Sneer. Is that all?

Verj. Lady Sneerwell, I'll go and write the letter I mentioned to you. [*Exit* Verj.

Surf. If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

Lady Sneer. Nay, now, you are severe, for I dare swear the truth of the matter is Maria heard *you* were here; but, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done that you should avoid him so?

Mar. Oh, he has done nothing; but his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

Surf. Aye, and the worst of it is there is no advantage in not knowing them, for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend—and Crabtree is as bad.

Lady Sneer. Nay, but we should make allowance—Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

Mar. For my part—I own, madam—wit loses its respect with me, when I see it in company with malice.—What do you think, Mr. Surface?

Surf. Certainly, madam, to smile at the jest which plants a thorn on another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

Lady Sneer. Pshaw, there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill-nature—the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick.—What's your opinion, Mr. Surface?

Surf. Certainly, madam—that conversation where the spirit of raillery is suppressed will ever appear tedious and insipid.

Mar. Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable—but in a man I am sure it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalship, and a thousand motives to depreciate each other, but the male-slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Lady Sneer. I wish my cousin Verjuice hadn't left us—she should embrace you.

Surf. Ah! she's an old maid and is privileged of course.

Enter Servant.

Madam, Mrs. Candour is below and if your Ladyship's at leisure will leave her carriage.

Lady Sneer. Beg her to walk in [*Exit* Servant]. Now, Maria, however here is a character to your taste, for tho' Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, everybody allows her to be the best-natured and best sort of woman.

Mar. Yes, with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

Surf. Efaith, 'tis very true, Lady Sneerwell. Whenever I hear the current running again the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence.

Lady Sneer. Hush, here she is——

Enter Mrs. Candour.

Mrs. Can. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century? I have never seen you tho' I have heard of you very often.—Mr. Surface, the world says scandalous things of you—but indeed it is no matter what the world says, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

Surf. Just so, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. Ah, Maria, child—what! is the whole affair off between you and Charles? His extravagance, I presume—the town talks of nothing else——

Mar. I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

Mrs. Can. True, true, child; but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it—as I indeed was to learn from the same quarter that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle have not agreed lately so well as could be wished.

Mar. 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

Mrs. Can. Very true, child; but what's to be done? People will talk—there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filagree Flirt. But, Lord! there is no minding what one hears; tho' to be sure I had this from very good authority.

Mar. Such reports are highly scandalous.

Mrs. Can. So they are, child—shameful!

shameful! but the world is so censorious no character escapes. Lord, now! who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion; yet such is the ill-nature of people that they say her uncle stopped her last week just as she was stepping into a postchaise with her dancing-master.

Mar. I'll answer for't there are no grounds for the report.

Mrs. Can. Oh, no foundation in the world I dare swear; no more probably than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino—though to be sure that matter was never rightly cleared up.

Surf. The licence of invention some people take is monstrous indeed.

Mar. 'Tis so; but in my opinion those who report such things are equally culpable.

Mrs. Can. To be sure they are; tale bearers are as bad as the tale makers—'tis an old observation and a very true one—but what's to be done, as I said before? How will you prevent people from talking? Today Mrs. Clackit assured me Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife—like the rest of their acquaintance; she likewise hinted that a certain widow in the next street had got rid of her dropsy and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner; at the same time Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed that Lord Boffalo had discovered his Lady at a house of no extraordinary fame, and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation. But, Lord! do you think I would report these things? No, no! tale bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale makers.

Surf. Ah! Mrs. Candour, if everybody had your forbearance and good nature—

Mrs. Can. I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people traduced behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintances, I own I always love to think the best.—By the bye, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined—

Surf. I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. Ah! I heard so; but you must tell him to keep up his spirits; everybody almost is in the same way—Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, Captain Quinze, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week; so if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation—

Surf. Doubtless, ma'am, a very great one.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite.

Lady Sneer. Soh! Maria, you see your lover pursues you. Positively you shan't escape.

Enter Crabtree *and* Sir Benjamin Backbite.

Crab. Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand. Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite. Egad, ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet too, isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

Sir Ben. O fie, uncle!

Crab. Nay, egad, it's true. I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymer in the kingdom. Has your Ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire?—do, Benjamin, repeat it—or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowzie's conversazione?—Come now, your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander—and—

Sir Ben. Dear uncle—now—prithee——

Crab. Efaith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at all these things.

Lady Sneer. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

Sir Ben. To say truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print, and as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties; however, I have some love-elegies, which, when favored with this lady's smile, I mean to give to the public. [*Pointing to* Maria.

Crab. 'Fore Heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalize you—you'll be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

Sir Ben. Yes, madam, I think you will like them—when you shall see in a beautiful quarto page how a neat rivulet of text shall meander thro' a meadow of margin—'fore Gad, they will be the most elegant things of their kind—

Crab. But, ladies, have you heard the news?

Mrs. Can. What, sir, do you mean the report of——

Crab. No, ma'am, that's not it.—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

Mrs. Can. Impossible!

Crab. Ask Sir Benjamin.

Sir Ben. 'Tis very true, ma'am; everything is fixed and the wedding livery bespoke.

Crab. Yes, and they say there were pressing reasons for't.

Mrs. Can. It cannot be—and I wonder any one should believe such a story of so prudent a lady as Niss Nicely.

Sir Ben. O Lud! ma'am, that's the very reason 'twas believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved that

everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

Lady Sneer. Yes, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the reputation of a prudent lady of her stamp as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions, but there is a sort of puny sickly reputation, that is always ailing yet will outlive the robuster characters of a hundred prudes.

Sir Ben. True, madam, there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

Mrs. Can. Well, but this may be all mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

Crab. That they do I'll be sworn, ma'am. Did you ever hear how Miss Shepherd came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge?—Sir Benjamin, you remember it.

Sir Ben. O to be sure the most whimsical circumstance—

Lady Sneer. How was it, pray?

Crab. Why, one evening at Mrs. Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the difficulty of breeding Nova-Scotia sheep in this country—says a young lady in company, "I have known instances of it—for Miss Letitia Shepherd, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova-Scotia sheep that produced her twins,"—"What!" cries the old Dowager Lady Dundizzy (who you know is as deaf as a post), "has Miss Letitia Shepherd had twins?"—This mistake—as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughing. However, 'twas the next morning everywhere reported and in a few days believed by the whole town that Miss Letitia Shepherd had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl, and in less than a week there were people who could name the father, and the farm house where the babies were put out to nurse.

Lady Sneer. Strange indeed!

Crab. Matter of fact, I assure you. O Lud! Mr. Surface, pray, is it true that your uncle Sir Oliver is coming home?

Surf. Not that I know of indeed, sir.

Crab. He has been in the East Indies a long time—you can scarcely remember him—I believe—sad comfort on his arrival to hear how your brother has gone on!

Surf. Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

Sir Ben. To be sure he may; for my part I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say; and tho' he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of—by the Jews.

Crab. That's true, egad, nephew; if the Old Jewry was a ward I believe Charles would be an alderman—no man more popular there; 'fore Gad, I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish Tontine, and that whenever he's sick they have prayers for the recovery of his health in the synagogue.

Sir Ben. Yet no man lives in greater splendor:—they tell me when he entertains his friends, he can sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities, have a score of tradesmen waiting in the ante-chamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

Surf. This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

Mar. Their malice is intolerable. Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning—I'm not very well. [*Exit* MAR.

Mrs. Can. O dear, she changed color very much!

Lady Sneer. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her—she may want assistance.

Mrs. Can. That I will with all my soul, ma'am.—Poor, dear girl—who knows—what her situation may be! [*Exit* MRS. CAN.

Lady Sneer. 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on notwithstanding their difference.

Sir Ben. The young lady's penchant is obvious.

Crab. But, Benjamin, you mustn't give up the pursuit for that—follow her and put her into good humor—repeat her some of your verses—come, I'll assist you—

Sir Ben. Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you, but depend on't your brother is utterly undone. [*Going.*

Crab. O Lud! aye—undone—as ever man was—can't raise a guinea.

Sir Ben. And everything sold, I'm told, that was movable. [*Going.*

Crab. I was at his house—not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscot. [*Going.*

Sir Ben. And I'm very sorry to hear also some bad stories against him. [*Going.*

Crab. O he has done many mean things, that's certain!

Sir Ben. But however, as he is your brother—— [*Going.*

Crab. We'll tell you all another opportunity. [*Exeunt.*

Lady Sneer. Ha! ha! ha! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

Surf. And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

Lady Sneer. I doubt her affections are farther engaged than we imagined; but the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are and we shall have an opportunity of observing farther.

In the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief and you shall study sentiments. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Sir Peter's *House.*

Enter Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. **When an old bachelor takes a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since that ever committed wedlock. We tift a little going to church—and came to a quarrel before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country—who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown—nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race-ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the fashion and the town, with as ready a grace as if she had never seen a bush nor a grass plot out of Grosvenor-Square! I am sneered at by my old acquaintance—paragraphed—in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humors. Yet the worst of it is I doubt I love her or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.**

Enter Rowley.

Row. **Sir Peter, your servant:—how is't with you, sir?**

Sir Pet. **Very bad—Master Rowley—very bad. I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.**

Row. **What can have happened to trouble you since yesterday?**

Sir Pet. **A good question to a married man—**

Row. **Nay, I'm sure your lady, Sir Peter, can't be the cause of your uneasiness.**

Sir Pet. **Why, has anybody told you she was dead?**

Row. **Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers do not exactly agree.**

Sir Pet. **But the fault is entirely hers, Master Rowley; I am myself the sweetest tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper; and so I tell her a hundred times a day.**

Row. **Indeed!**

Sir Pet. **Aye, and what is very extraordinary in all our disputes, she is always in the wrong! But Lady Sneerwell and the set she meets at her house encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then to complete my vexations, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband—meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.**

Row. **You know, Sir Peter, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen; I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't! He will retrieve his errors yet; their worthy father, once my honored master, was at his years nearly as wild a spark.**

Sir Pet. **You are wrong, Master Rowley. On their father's death you know I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's Eastern bounty gave them an early independence. Of course no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts—and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment and acts up to the sentiments he professes; but for the other, take my word for't, if he had any gain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.**

Row. **I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.**

Sir Pet. **What! let me hear.**

Row. **Sir Oliver is arrived and at this moment in town.**

Sir Pet. **How!—you astonish me—I thought you did not expect him this month!**

Row. **I did not, but his passage has been remarkably quick.**

Sir Pet. **Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met. We have had many a day together. But does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?**

Row. **Most strictly. He means, before he makes it known, to make some trial of their dispositions, and we have already planned something for the purpose.**

Sir Pet. **Ah, there needs no art to discover their merits; however, he shall have his way. But pray does he know I am married?**

Row. **Yes, and will soon wish you joy.**

Sir Pet. **You may tell him 'tis too late. Ah, Oliver will laugh at me—we used to rail at matrimony together—but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be at my house tho'—I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, Master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.**

Row. **By no means.**

Sir Pet. **For I should never be able to**

stand Noll's jokes; so I'd have him think that we are a very happy couple.

Row. I understand you; but then you must be very careful not to differ while he's in the house with you.

Sir Pet. Egad—and so we must—that's impossible. Ah! Master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves —no, the crime carries the punishment along with it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Scene I

[*At* Sir Peter's.]

Sir Peter *and* Lady Teazle.

Sir Pet. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it.

Lady Teaz. Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you—may scold or smile, according to your humor, but I ought to have my own way in everything, and what's more I will too. What! tho' I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

Sir Pet. Very well! ma'am, very well! so a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

Lady Teaz. Authority! no, to be sure—if you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me and not married me: I am sure you were old enough.

Sir Pet. Old enough—aye, there it is—well—well—Lady Teazle, tho' my life may be made unhappy by your temper—I'll not be ruined by your extravagance.

Lady Teaz. My extravagance! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

Sir Pet. No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife to spend as much to furnish your dressing room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon into a greenhouse, and give a *Fête Champêtre* at Christmas.

Lady Teaz. Lord! Sir Peter, am I to blame because flowers are dear in cold weather? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part I'm sure I wish it was spring all the year round—and that roses grew under one's feet!

Sir Pet. Oons! madam, if you had been born to those fopperies, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

Lady Teaz. No, no, I don't; 'twas a very disagreeable one or I should never have married you.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style—the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first—sitting at your tambour in a pretty figured linen gown—with a bunch of keys at your side, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

Lady Teaz. O horrible!—horrible!—don't put me in mind of it!

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, madam, and your daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb your aunt Deborah's lap dog.

Lady Teaz. Abominable!

Sir Pet. Yes, madam, and what were your evening amusements? To draw patterns for ruffles, which you hadn't the materials to make, play Pope Joan with the curate, to read a sermon to your aunt, or be stuck down to an old spinet to strum your father to sleep after a fox chase.

Lady Teaz. Scandalous—Sir Peter, not a word of it true.

Sir Pet. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from; and now—no one more extravagantly in the fashion—every foppery adopted—a head-dress to o'ertop Lady Pagoda with feathers pendant, horizontal, and perpendicular. You forget, Lady Teazle, when a little wired gauze with a few beads made you a fly cap not much bigger than a blew-bottle, and your hair was combed smooth over a roll.

Lady Teaz. Shocking! horrible roll!!

Sir Pet. But now—you must have your coach—*Vis-à-vis*, and three powdered footmen before your chair—and in the summer a pair of white cobs to draw you to Kensington Gardens—no recollection when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a docked coach-horse!

Lady Teaz. Horrid!—I swear I never did.

Sir Pet. This, madam, was your situation —and what have I not done for you? I have made you woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank—in short I have made you my wife.

Lady Teaz. Well, then, and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligation.

Sir Pet. What's that, pray?

Lady Teaz. Your widow.

Sir Pet. Thank you, madam—but don't flatter yourself, for though your ill-conduct may disturb my peace, it shall never break my heart, I promise you. However I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

Lady Teaz. Then, why will you endeavor to make yourself so disagreeable to me and thwart me in every little elegant expense?

Sir Pet. 'Slife, madam, I pray, had you any of these elegant expenses when you married me?

Lady Teaz. Lud, Sir Peter, would you have me be out of the fashion?

Sir Pet. The fashion indeed!—what had

you to do with the fashion before you married me?

Lady Teaz. For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

Sir Pet. Aye, there again—taste! Zounds, madam, you had no taste when you married me.

Lady Teaz. That's very true indeed, Sir Peter! after having married you I should never pretend to taste again, I allow.

Sir Pet. So, so, then, madam, if these are your sentiments, pray how came I to be honored with your hand?

Lady Teaz. Shall I tell you the truth?

Sir Pet. If it's not too great a favor.

Lady Teaz. Why, the fact is, I was tired of all those agreeable recreations which you have so good-naturedly described, and having a spirit to spend and enjoy a fortune, I determined to marry the first rich man that would have me.

Sir Pet. A very honest confession—truly—but pray, madam, was there no one else you might have tried to ensnare but me?

Lady Teaz. O lud—I drew my net at several but you were the only one I could catch.

Sir Pet. This is plain dealing indeed.

Lady Teaz. But now, Sir Peter, if we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's?

Sir Pet. Aye—there's another precious circumstance—a charming set of acquaintance—you have made there!

Lady Teaz. Nay, Sir Peter, they are people of rank and fortune—and remarkably tenacious of reputation.

Sir Pet. Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance, for they don't choose anybody should have a character but themselves! Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on hurdles who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

Lady Teaz. What! would you restrain the freedom of speech?

Sir Pet. Aye, they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

Lady Teaz. Why—I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace. But I vow I bear no malice against the people I abuse; when I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humor—and I take it for granted they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too.

Sir Pet. Well, well, I'll call in, just to look after my own character.

Lady Teaz. Then, indeed, you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late; so good bye to ye.

Sir Pet. So—I have gained much by my intended expostulation. Yet with what a charming air she contradicts every thing I say—and how pleasingly she shows her contempt of my authority. Well, tho' I can't make her love me, there is certainly a great satisfaction in quarrelling with her; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing everything in her power to plague me. [*Exit.*

Scene II

At Lady Sneerwell's.

Lady Sneerwell, Mrs. Candour, Crabtree, Sir Benjamin Backbite, *and* Surface.

Lady Sneer. Nay, positively, we will hear it.

Surf. Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means.

Sir Ben. O plague on't, uncle, 'tis mere nonsense.

Crab. No, no; 'fore gad, very clever for an extempore!

Sir Ben. But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstances. You must know that one day last week as Lady Betty Curricle was taking the dust in High Park, in a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she desired me to write some verses on her ponies; upon which I took out my pocketbook, and in one moment produced—the following:—

'Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies;
Other horses are clowns—and these macaronies,
Nay to give 'em this title, I'm sure isn't wrong,
Their legs are so slim—and their tails are so long.

Crab. There, ladies—done in the smack of a whip and on horseback too.

Surf. A very Phœbus, mounted—indeed, Sir Benjamin.

Sir Ben. Oh, dear sir—trifles—trifles.

Enter Lady Teazle *and* Maria.

Mrs. Can. I must have a copy.

Lady Sneer. Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter?

Lady Teaz. I believe he'll wait on your Ladyship presently.

Lady Sneer. Maria, my love, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface.

Mar. I take very little pleasure in cards; however, I'll do as you please.

Lady Teaz. I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me before Sir Peter came. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Can. Now, I'll die but you are so scandalous I'll forswear your society.

Lady Teaz. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

Mrs. Can. They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermillion to be handsome.

Lady Sneer. Oh, surely she is a pretty woman. . . .

Crab. I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

Mrs. Can. She has a charming fresh color.

Crab. Yes, when it is fresh put on.

Lady Teaz. O fie! I'll swear her color is natural—I have seen it come and go.

Crab. I dare swear you have, ma'am: it goes of a night, and comes again in the morning.

Sir Ben. True, uncle, it not only comes and goes but what's more, egad, her maid can fetch and carry it.

Mrs. Can. Ha! ha! ha! how I hate to hear you talk so! But surely, now, her sister is or was very handsome.

Crab. Who? Mrs. Stucco? O lud! she's six-and-fifty if she's an hour!

Mrs. Can. Now positively you wrong her; fifty-two, or fifty-three is the utmost—and I don't think she looks more.

Sir Ben. Ah! there's no judging by her looks, unless one was to see her face.

Lady Sneer. Well—well—if she does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity—and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ocre chalks her wrinkles.

Sir Ben. Nay, now, you are severe upon the widow; come, come, it isn't that she paints so ill—but when she has finished her face she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur sees at once that the head's modern though the trunk's antique.

Crab. Ha! ha! ha! well said, nephew!

Mrs. Can. Ha! ha! ha! Well, you make me laugh but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper?

Sir Ben. Why, she has very pretty teeth.

Lady Teaz. Yes, and on that account, when she is neither speaking nor laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on a-jar, as it were.

Mrs. Can. How can you be so ill-natured?

Lady Teaz. Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal her losses in front—she draws her mouth till it resembles the aperture of a poor's-box, and all her words appear to slide out edgewise.

Lady Sneer. Very well, Lady Teazle, I see you can be a little severe.

Lady Teaz. In defence of a friend it is but justice, but here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. Ladies, your obedient—mercy on me, here is the whole set! a character's dead at every word, I suppose.

Mrs. Can. I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter; they have been so censorious and Lady Teazle as bad as any one.

Sir Pet. That must be very distressing to you, Mrs. Candour, I dare swear.

Mrs. Can. O, they will allow good qualities to nobody—not even good nature to our friend, Mrs. Pursy.

Lady Teaz. What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night?

Lady Sneer. Nay, her bulk is her misfortune and when she takes such pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

Mrs. Can. 'Tis very true, indeed.

Lady Teaz. Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey—laces herself by pulleys and often in the hottest noon of summer you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's, and puffing round the Ring on a full trot.

Mrs. Can. I thank you, Lady Teazle, for defending her.

Sir Pet. Yes, a good defence, truly!

Mrs. Can. But for Sir Benjamin, he is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

Crab. Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious—an awkward gawky, without any one good point under Heaven!

Lady Sneer. Positively, you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a relation of mine by marriage, and, as for her person great allowance is to be made; for, let me tell you, a woman labors under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl at six-and-thirty.

Mrs. Can. Though, surely she is handsome still—and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candle-light, it is not to be wondered at.

Lady Sneer. True, and then as to her manner—upon my word, I think it is particularly graceful considering she never had the least education: for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristow.——

Sir Ben. Ah! You are both of you too good-natured!

Sir Pet. Yes, damned good-natured! Her own relation! mercy on me! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Can. For my part I own I cannot bear to hear a friend ill-spoken of.

Sir Pet. No, to be sure!

Sir Ben. Ah, you are of a moral turn, Mrs. Candour, and can sit for an hour to hear Lady Stucco talk sentiments.

Lady Sneer. Nay, I vow Lady Stucco is very well with the dessert after dinner, for

she's just like the Spanish fruit one cracks for mottoes,—made up of paint and proverb.

Mrs. Can. Well, I never will join in ridiculing a friend—and so I constantly tell my cousin Ogle—and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical in beauty.

Lady Teaz. O, to be sure, she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen—'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

Sir Ben. So she has indeed—an Irish front——

Crab. Caledonian locks——

Sir Ben. Dutch nose——

Crab. Austrian lips——

Sir Ben. Complexion of a Spaniard——

Crab. And teeth *à la Chinoise*——

Sir Ben. In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa—where no two guests are of a nation——

Crab. Or a congress at the close of a general war, wherein all the members even to her eyes appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

Mrs. Can. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Mercy on my life! a person they dine with twice a week! [*Aside.*

Lady Sneer. Go—go—you are a couple of provoking toads.

Mrs. Can. Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so—for give me leave to say, that Mrs. Ogle——

Sir Pet. Madam, madam—I beg your pardon—there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues—but when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

Lady Sneer. Ha! ha! ha! well said, Sir Peter; but you are a cruel creature—too phlegmatic yourself for a jest and too peevish to allow wit in others.

Sir Pet. Ah, madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good nature than your ladyship is aware of.

Lady Sneer. True, Sir Peter—I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

Sir Ben. O rather, madam, suppose them man and wife because one seldom sees them together.

Lady Teaz. But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal I believe he would have it put down by Parliament.

Sir Pet. 'Fore heaven! madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of fame, there are many would thank them for the bill.

Lady Sneer. O Lud! Sir Peter, would you deprive us of our privileges—

Sir Pet. Aye, madam, and then no person should be permitted to kill characters or run down reputations but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

Lady Sneer. Go, you monster—

Mrs. Can. But sure you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear?

Sir Pet. Yes, madam, I would have Law Merchant for that too—and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured party should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.

Crab. Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

Lady Sneer. Come, ladies, shall we sit down to cards in the next room?

Enter Servant, *whispers* Sir Peter.

Sir Pet. I'll be with them directly.—[*Exit* Servant.] I'll get away unperceived.

Lady Sneer. Sir Peter, you are not leaving us?

Sir Pet. Your ladyship must excuse me—I'm called away by particular business—but I leave my character behind me. [*Exit.*

Sir Ben. Well, certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a strange being; I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily if he weren't your husband.

Lady Teaz. O, pray don't mind that—come, do let's hear 'em. [*join the rest of the company going into the next room.*]

Surf. Maria, I see you have no satisfaction in this society.

Mar. How is it possible I should? If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us be the province of wit or humor, Heaven grant me a double portion of dullness.

Surf. Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are—they have no malice at heart.

Mar. Then is their conduct still more contemptible; for in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues but a natural and ungovernable bitterness of mind.

Surf. Undoubtedly, madam—and it has always been a sentiment of mine—that to propagate a malicious truth wantonly is more despicable than to falsify from revenge; but can you, Maria, feel thus for others and be unkind to me alone—nay, is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

Mar. Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

Surf. Ah! Maria! you would not treat me thus and oppose your guardian's, Sir Peter's, wishes—but that I see that my profligate brother is still a favored rival.

Mar. Ungenerously urged; but whatever my sentiments of that unfortunate young

man are, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up because his distresses have sunk him so low as to deprive him of the regard even of a brother.

Surf. Nay but, Maria, do not leave me with a frown—by all that's honest, I swear ——Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle—you must not—no, you shall—for though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle——

Mar. Lady Teazle!

Surf. Yet were Sir Peter to suspect——

Enter LADY TEAZLE, *and comes forward.*

Lady Teaz. What's this, pray—do you take her for me!—Child, you are wanted in the next room.—What's all this, pray—

Surf. O, the most unlucky circumstance in nature. Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions—and I was just endeavoring to reason with her when you came.

Lady Teaz. Indeed but you seemed to adopt—a very tender mode of reasoning. Do you usually argue on your knees?

Surf. O, she's a child—and I thought a little bombast——but, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library as you promised?

Lady Teaz. No—no, I begin to think it would be imprudent—and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

Surf. True—a mere Platonic Cicisbeo, what every London wife is entitled to.

Lady Teaz. Certainly one must not be out of the fashion—however, I have so much of my country prejudices left—that—though Sir Peter's ill humor may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to——

Surf. The only revenge in your power—well, I applaud your moderation.

Lady Teaz. Go—you are an insinuating hypocrite—but we shall be missed—let us join the company.

Surf. True, but we had best not return together.

Lady Teaz. Well, don't stay—for Maria shan't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Surf. A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into. I wanted at first only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle that she might not be my enemy with Maria—and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover, so that I stand a chance of committing a crime I never meditated—and probably of losing Maria by the pursuit!—Sincerely I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many curst rogueries that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

At SIR PETER'S.

ROWLEY *and* SIR OLIVER.

Sir Oliv. Ha! ha! ha! and so my old friend is married, hey?—a young wife out of the country!—ha! ha! that he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long and sink into a husband at last!

Row. But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver—'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

Sir Oliv. Ah, then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance—poor Peter! But you say he has entirely given up Charles—never sees him, hey?

Row. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure, greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady Teazle—which he has been industriously led into by a scandalous society in the neighborhood who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them his brother is the favorite.

Sir Oliv. Aye—I know—there are a set of malicious, prating, prudent gossips both male and female, who murder characters to kill time, and will rob a young fellow of his good name before he has years to know the value of it . . . but I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you! No! no, if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

Row. Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him. Ah, sir, it gives me new vigor to find that your heart is not turned against him—and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

Sir Oliv. What! shall I forget, Master Rowley—when I was at his house myself—egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths—and yet I believe you have not seen many better men than your old master was.

Row. 'Tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family—but here comes Sir Peter——

Sir Oliv. Egad, so he does—mercy on me—he's greatly altered—and seems to have a settled married look—one may read husband in his face at this distance.

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. Ha! Sir Oliver—my old friend—welcome to England—a thousand times!

Sir Oliv. Thank you—thank you—Sir Peter—and efaith I am as glad to find you well, believe me—

Sir Pet. Ah! 'tis a long time since we met—sixteen year, I doubt, Sir Oliver—and many a cross accident in the time—

Sir Oliv. Aye, I have had my share—but, what! I find you are married—hey, my old boy—well—well it can't be helped—and so I wish you joy with all my heart.

Sir Pet. Thank you—thanks, Sir Oliver.—Yes, I have entered into the happy state, but we'll not talk of that now.

Sir Oliv. True, true, Sir Peter, old friends shouldn't begin on grievances at first meeting. No, no—

Row. Take care, pray, sir——

Sir Oliv. Well—so one of my nephews, I find, is a wild rogue—hey?

Sir Pet. Wild!—oh! my old friend—I grieve for your disappointment there. He's a lost young man indeed; however his brother will make you amends; Joseph is indeed what a youth should be—everybody in the world speaks well of him.

Sir Oliv. I am sorry to hear it—he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Everybody speaks well of him! Psha! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of virtue.

Sir Pet. What! Sir Oliver, do you blame him for not making enemies?

Sir Oliv. Yes—if he has merit enough to deserve them.

Sir Pet. Well—well—you'll be convinced when you know him—'tis edification to hear him converse—he professes the noblest sentiments.

Sir Oliv. Ah, plague on his sentiments—if he salutes me with a scrap sentence of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly—but, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter, I don't mean to defend Charles's errors; but before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts—and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.

Row. And Sir Peter shall own he has been for once mistaken.

Sir Pet. My life on Joseph's honor——

Sir Oliv. Well, come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' healths and tell you our scheme.

Sir Pet. *Allons,* then——

Sir Oliv. But don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son.

Sir Pet. 'Tis his vices and follies have made me his enemy.

Row. Come—come—Sir Peter, consider how early he was left to his own guidance.

Sir Oliv. Odds, my life—I am not sorry that he has run out of the course a little; for my part, I hate to see dry prudence clinging to the green juices of youth—'tis like ivy round a sapling and spoils the growth of the tree.

ACT III

Scene I

At Sir Peter's.

Sir Peter, Sir Oliver, *and* Rowley.

Sir Pet. Well, then, we will see the fellows first and have our wine afterwards. But how is this, Master Rowley? I don't see the jet of your scheme.

Row. Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley whom I was speaking of is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes, and now lately coming over to solicit the assistance of his friends here, has been flung into prison by some of his creditors, where he is now with two helpless boys.

Sir Oliv. Aye, and a worthy fellow, too, I remember him. But what is this to lead to?

Row. You shall hear. He has applied by letter both to Mr. Surface and Charles; from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do, and he is at this time endeavoring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.

Sir Oliv. Ah! he is my brother's son.

Sir Pet. Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to——

Row. Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother that Stanley has obtained permission to apply in person to his friends, and as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging at least of the benevolence of their dispositions.

Sir Pet. Pshaw! this will prove nothing. I make no doubt Charles is coxcomb and thoughtless enough to give money to poor relations if he had it.

Sir Oliv. Then he shall never want it. I have brought a few rupees home with me, Sir Peter, and I only want to be sure of bestowing them rightly.

Row. Then, sir, believe me you will find in the youngest brother one who in the midst of folly and dissipation has still, as our immortal bard expresses it,—

"a tear for pity and a hand open as the day
for melting charity."

Sir Pet. Pish! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either when he has nothing left to give! But if you talk of humane sentiments, Joseph is the man. Well, well, make the trial, if you please. But

where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs?

Row. Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence. This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who to do him justice, has done everything in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

Sir Pet. Pray, let us have him in.

Row. Desire Mr. Moses to walk upstairs.

[*Calls to* Servant.

Sir Pet. But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth?

Row. Oh, I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his interest. I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I shall shortly produce to remove some of *your* prejudices. Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

Sir Pet. I have heard too much on that subject.

Row. Here comes the honest Israelite.

Enter Moses.

—This is Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. Sir—I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

Mos. Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him, but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

Sir Oliv. That was unlucky truly—for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

Mos. None at all—I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing, till it was impossible to add to them.

Sir Oliv. Unfortunate indeed! but I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses?

Mos. Yes, he knows that. This very evening I was to have brought him a gentleman from the city who does not know him and will I believe advance some money.

Sir Pet. What! one Charles has never had money from before?

Mos. Yes—Mr. Premium, of Crutched Friars.

Sir Pet. Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me!—Charles you say doesn't know Mr. Premium?

Mos. Not at all.

Sir Pet. Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation—go with my friend Moses and represent Mr. Premium, and then I'll answer for't you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

Sir Oliv. Egad, I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

Sir Pet. True, so you may.

Row. Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure—however, Moses—you understand Sir Peter and will be faithful——

Mos. You may depend upon me—and this is near the time I was to have gone.

Sir Oliv. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses——but hold—I have forgot one thing—how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

Mos. There's no need; the principal is Christian.

Sir Oliv. Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it—but then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a money-lender?

Sir Pet. Not at all; 'twould not be out of character, if you went in your own carriage, would it, Moses!

Mos. Not in the least.

Sir Oliv. Well—but—how must I talk? there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

Sir Pet. Oh, there's not much to learn—the great point as I take it is to be exorbitant enough in your demands, hey, Moses?

Mos. Yes that's very great point.

Sir Oliv. I'll answer for't I'll not be wanting in that—I'll ask him eight or ten per cent. on the loan—at least.

Mos. You'll be found out directly; if you ask him no more than that, you'll be discovered immediately.

Sir Oliv. Hey! what the plague!—how much then?

Mos. That depends upon the circumstances—if he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent.—but if you find him in great distress, and want the monies very bad, you may ask double.

Sir Pet. A good, honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver—

Sir Oliv. Truly, I think so—and not unprofitable—

Mos. Then, you know, you haven't the monies yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

Sir Oliver. O, I borrow it of a friend, do I?

Mos. And your friend is an unconscioned dog—but you can't help it.

Sir Oliv. My friend's an unconscionable dog, is he?

Mos. Yes—and he himself hasn't the monies by him—but is forced to sell stock—at a great loss—

Sir Oliv. He is forced to sell stock, is he—at a great loss, is he? Well, that's very kind of him.

Sir Pet. Efaith, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium I mean—you'll soon be master of the trade—

but, Moses would have him inquire if the borrower is a minor—

Mos. O yes—

Sir Pet. And in that case his conscience will direct him—

Mos. To have the bond in another name to be sure.

Sir Oliv. Well—well, I shall be perfect—

Sir Pet. But, hearkee, wouldn't you have him also run out a little against the annuity bill? That would be in character I should think—

Mos. Very much.

Row. And lament that a young man now must be at years of discretion before he is suffered to ruin himself!

Mos. Aye, great pity!

Sir Pet. And abuse the public for allowing merit to an act whose only object is to snatch misfortune and imprudence from the rapacious relief of usury! and give the minor a chance of inheriting his estate without being undone by coming into possession.

Sir Oliv. So—so—Moses shall give me further instructions as we go together.

Sir Pet. You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by—

Sir Oliv. Oh, never fear: my tutor appears so able that tho' Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner— [*Exeunt* Sir Oliver *and* Moses.

Sir Pet. So, now I think Sir Oliver will be convinced—you shan't follow them, Rowley. You are partial and would have prepared Charles for t'other plot.

Row. No, upon my word, Sir Peter—

Sir Pet. Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say presently. I see Maria, and want to speak with her. [*Exit* Rowley.] I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust; I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph. . . . I am determined. I will do it—he will give me his opinion sincerely.—

Enter Maria.

So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

Mar. No, sir, he was engaged.

Sir Pet. Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

Mar. Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely; you compel me to declare that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

Sir Pet. Soh! Here's perverseness; no, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer—'tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

Mar. This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him—I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

Sir Pet. Well, well, pity him as much as you please, but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

Mar. Never to his brother!

Sir Pet. Go—perverse and obstinate! but take care, madam, you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is—don't compel me to inform you of it.

Mar. I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute, but I must cease to think you so when you would compel me to be miserable. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Was ever man so crossed as I am, everything conspiring to fret me? I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and hearty man, died on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter . . . but here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good humor; how happy I should be if I could teaze her into loving me tho' but a little.

Enter Lady Teazle.

Lady Teaz. Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It isn't using me well to be ill-humored when I am not by!

Sir Pet. Ah! Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humored at all times.

Lady Teaz. I am sure—I wish I had—for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment—do be good-humored now—and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

Sir Pet. Two hundred pounds! what, an't I to be in a good humor without paying for it? But speak to me thus—and efaith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it—but seal me a bond for the repayment.

Lady Teaz. O no—there—my note of hand will do as well.

Sir Pet. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement—I shall shortly surprise you—and you'll not call me ungenerous. But shall we always live thus—hey?

Lady Teaz. If you—please—I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling provided you'll own you were tired first.

Sir Pet. Well—then let our future contest be who shall be most obliging.

Lady Teaz. I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you—you look now as you did before we were married—when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth—and chuck me under the chin, you would—and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow who would deny me nothing—didn't you?

Sir Pet. Yes—yes—and you were as kind and attentive——

Lady Teaz. Aye, so I was—and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you and turn you into ridicule—

Sir Pet. Indeed!

Lady Teaz. Aye—and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish, old bachelor and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father—I have always defended you—and said I didn't think you so ugly by any means, and that you'd make a very good sort of a husband—

Sir Pet. And you prophesied right—and we shall certainly now be the happiest couple——

Lady Teaz. And never differ again.

Sir Pet. No, never—tho' at the same time indeed—my dear Lady Teazle—you must watch your temper very narrowly—for in all our little quarrels—my dear—if you recollect, my love, you always began first—

Lady Teaz. I beg your pardon—my dear Sir Peter—indeed—you always gave the provocation.

Sir Pet. Now—see, my love, take care—contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

Lady Teaz. Then don't you begin it, my love!

Sir Pet. There now—you are going on—you don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing, my love, which you know always makes me angry.

Lady Teaz. Nay—you know if you will be angry without any reason—my dear——

Sir Pet. There now you want to quarrel again.

Lady Teaz. No—I am sure I don't—but if you will be so peevish——

Sir Pet. There—now who begins first?

Lady Teaz. Why, you, to be sure—I said nothing—but there's no bearing your temper.

Sir Pet. No—no—my dear—the fault's in your own temper.

Lady Teaz. Aye, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be—

Sir Pet. Your cousin Sophy—is a forward impertinent gipsey—

Lady Teaz. Go, you great bear—how dare you abuse my relations?

Sir Pet. Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more——

Lady Teaz. So much the better.

Sir Pet. No—no, madam, 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me—I was a madman to marry you—

Lady Teaz. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you—an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty—only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

Sir Pet. Aye—aye—madam—but you were pleased enough to listen to me—you never had such an offer before—

Lady Teaz. No—didn't I refuse Sir Jeremy Terrier—who everybody said would have been a better match—for his estate is just as good as yours—and he has broke his neck since we have been married!

Sir Pet. I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling—ungrateful—but there's an end of everything—I believe you capable of anything that's bad; yes, madam—I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles,—madam — yes — madam — you and Charles are—not without grounds——

Lady Teaz. Take care, Sir Peter—you had better not insinuate any such thing! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you——

Sir Pet. Very—well—madam—very well! a separate maintenance—as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce—I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors. Let us separate, madam.

Lady Teaz. Agreed—agreed—and now—my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind again, we may be the happiest couple—and never differ again, you know—ha! ha!—Well, you are going to be in a passion I see—and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye! bye! hey—young jockey tried and countered. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Plagues and tortures! She pretends to keep her temper; can't I make her angry neither! O! I am the miserable fellow! But I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper—No, she may break my heart—but she shan't keep her temper. [*Exit.*

Scene II

At Charles's *House.*

Enter Trip, Moses, *and* Sir Oliver.

Trip. Here, Master Moses—if you'll stay a moment—I'll try whether Mr.——what's the gentleman's name?

Sir Oliv. Mr. —— Moses — what *is* my name——

Mos. Mr. Premium——

Trip. Premium—very well.

[*Exit* Trip—*taking snuff.*

Sir Oliv. To judge by the servants—one wouldn't believe the master was ruined—but what—sure this was my brother's house——

Mos. Yes, sir, Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph with the furniture, pictures, &c.—just as the old gentleman left it—Sir Peter

thought it a great piece of extravagance in him.

Sir Oliv. In my mind the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.——

Enter Trip.

Trip. My master, Gentlemen, says you must wait, he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

Sir Oliv. If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he wouldn't have sent such a message.

Trip. Yes—yes—sir—he knows you are here—I didn't forget little Premium—no—no——

Sir Oliv. Very well—and pray, sir, what may be your name?

Trip. Trip, sir—my name is Trip, at your service.

Sir Oliv. Well, then. Mr. Trip—I presume your master is seldom without company——

Trip. Very seldom, sir—the world says ill-natured things of him but 'tis all malice—no man was ever better beloved; sir, he seldom sits down to dinner without a dozen particular friends——

Sir Oliv. He's very happy indeed—you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess?

Trip. Why, yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough—but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year and find our own bags and bouquets——

Sir Oliv. Bags and bouquets!—Halters and bastinadoes! [*Aside.*

Trip. But *à propos*, Moses—have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

Sir Oliv. Wants to raise money too!—mercy on me! has his distresses, I warrant, like a lord—and affects creditors and duns! [*Aside.*

Mos. 'Twas not to be done, indeed——

Trip. Good lack—you surprise me—my friend Brush has indorsed it and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill, 'twas as good as cash.

Mos. No, 'twouldn't do.

Trip. A small sum—but twenty pound—harkee, Moses, do you think you could get it me by way of annuity?

Sir Oliv. An annuity! ha! ha! a footman raise money by annuity! Well done, Luxury, egad! [*Aside.*

Mos. Who would you get to join with you?

Trip. You know my Lord Applice—you have seen him however——

Mos. Yes——

Trip. You must have observed what an appearance he makes—nobody dresses better, nobody throws off faster—very well, this gentleman will stand my security.

Mos. Well—but you must insure your place.

Trip. O with all my heart—I'll insure my place, and my life too, if you please.

Sir Oliv. It's more than I would your neck——

Mos. But is there nothing you could deposit?

Trip. Why nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately—but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes with equity of redemption before November or—you shall have the reversion—of the French velvet, or a post obit on the blue and silver—these I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles as a collateral security—hey, my little fellow?

Mos. Well, well—we'll talk presently—we detain the gentlemen——

Sir Oliv. O, pray, don't let me interrupt Mr. Trip's negotiation.

Trip. Harkee—I heard the bell—I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you—don't forget the annuity, little Moses.

Sir Oliv. If the man be a shadow of his master, this is the Temple of Dissipation indeed! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Charles, Careless, etc., etc.

At Table with Wine.

Chas. 'Fore Heaven, 'tis true!—there is the great degeneracy of the age—many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness—but plague on't, they won't drink.

Care. It is so indeed, Charles; they give into all the substantial luxuries of the table—and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. Oh, certainly society suffers by it intolerably, for now instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy their conversation is become just like the Spa water they drink which has all the pertness and flatulence of champagne without its spirit or flavor.

1st Gent. But what are they to do who love play better than wine?

Care. True—there's Harry diets himself, for gaming and is now under a hazard regimen.

Chas. Then he'll have the worst of it. What, you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn. For my part, egad, I am never so successful as when I'm a little—merry—let me throw on a bottle of champagne and I never lose—at least I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

2d Gent. Aye, that may be—but it is as impossible to follow wine and play as to unite love and politics.

Chas. Pshaw! you may do both; Cæsar made love and laws in a breath—and was

liked by the Senate as well as the ladies. But no man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an abjurer of wine—'tis the test by which a lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats atop is the maid that has bewitched you.

Care. Now then, Charles—be honest and give us yours——

Chas. Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you—if I toast her you should give a round of her peers, which is impossible! on earth!

Care. O, then we'll find some canonized vestals or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant——

Chas. Here, then—bumpers—you rogues—bumpers! Maria—Maria——

1st Gent. Maria who?

Chas. Oh, damn the surname; 'tis too formal to be registered in Love's calendar—but now, Careless, beware—beware—we must have Beauty's superlative.

1st Gent. Nay, never study, Careless—we'll stand to the toast—tho' your mistress should want an eye—and you know you have a song will excuse you.

Care. Egad, so I have—and I'll give him the song instead of the lady.

Song.—And Chorus—

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
  Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
  And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.
Chorus. Let the toast pass,—
    Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for a glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;
  Now to the maid who has none, sir;
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
  And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.
Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow:
  Now to her that's as brown as a berry:
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
  And now to the damsel that's merry.
Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
  Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,
So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,
  And let us e'en toast them together.
Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

[*Enter* Trip, *whispers* Charles.

2d Gent. Bravo, Careless—There's toast and sentiment too.

1st Gent. E'faith, there's infinite charity in that song.——

Chas. Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little. Careless, take the chair, will you?

Care. Nay, prithee, Charles—what now—this is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, has dropped in by chance?

Chas. No, faith, to tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker who are come by appointment.

Care. O damn it, let's have the Jew in.

1st Gent. Aye and the broker, too, by all means——

2d Gent. Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.

Chas. Egad, with all my heart. Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in—tho' there's one of them a stranger I can tell you——

Trip. What, sir, would you choose Mr. Premium to come up with——

1st Gent. Yes, yes, Mr. Premium, certainly.

Care. To be sure, Mr. Premium, by all means, Charles; let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious——

Chas. O, hang 'em, no; wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Enter Trip, Sir Oliver, *and* Moses.

Chas. So—honest Moses, walk in, walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name, isn't it, Moses?

Mos. Yes, sir.

Chas. Set chairs, Trim.—Sit down, Mr. Premium. Glasses, Trim.—Sit down, Moses. Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment. Here's success to usury! Moses fill the gentleman a bumper.

Mos. Success to usury!

Care. Right, Moses, usury is prudence and industry and deserves to succeed.

Sir Oliv. Then, here is—all the success it deserves! [*Drinks.*

Chas. Mr. Premium, you and I are but strangers yet—but I hope we shall be better acquainted by and bye——

Sir Oliv. Yes, sir, hope we shall—more intimately perhaps than you'll wish. [*Aside.*

Care. No, no, that won't do! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper.

1st Gent. A pint bumper, at least.

Mos. Oh, pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

Care. And therefore loves good wine.

2d Gent. Give Moses a quart glass—this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

Care. Here, now for't! I'll see justice done, to the last drop of my bottle.

Sir Oliv. Nay, pray, gentlemen, I did not expect this usage.

Chas. No, hang it, you shan't; Mr. Premium's a stranger.

Sir Oliv. Odd! I wish I was well out of their company. [*Aside.*

Care. Plague on 'em then! if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room.—Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

Chas. I will! I will!—[*Exeunt* Sir Harry Bumper *and* Gentlemen; Careless *following.*] Careless.

Care. [*Returning.*] Well!

Chas. Perhaps I may want you.

Care. Oh, you know I am always ready: word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. [*Exit.*

Mos. Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honor and secrecy; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is——

Chas. Psha! have done. Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression: he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this: I am an extravagant young fellow who wants to borrow money; you I take to be a prudent old fellow, who have got money to lend. I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent. sooner than not have it! and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without further ceremony.

Sir Oliv. Exceeding frank, upon my word. I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

Chas. Oh, no, sir! plain dealing in business I always think best.

Sir Oliv. Sir, I like you the better for it. However, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend; but then he's an unconscionable dog. Isn't he, Moses? And must sell stock to accommodate you. Mustn't he, Moses!

Mos. Yes, indeed! You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie!

Chas. Right. People that speak truth generally do. But these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't!

Sir Oliv. Well, but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

Chas. Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots out of the window!

Sir Oliv. Nor any stock, I presume?

Chas. Nothing but live stock—and that's only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connections?

Sir Oliv. Why, to say the truth, I am.

Chas. Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations?

Sir Oliv. That you have a wealthy uncle, I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

Chas. Oh, no! there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favorite, and that he talks of leaving me everything.

Sir Oliver. Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

Chas. Yes, yes, 'tis just so. Moses knows 'tis true; don't you, Moses?

Mos. Oh, yes! I'll swear to't.

Sir Oliv. Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal. [*Aside.*

Chas. Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life: though at the same time the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear that anything had happened to him.

Sir Oliv. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me—for I might live to a hundred and never see the principal.

Chas. Oh, yes, you would! the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

Sir Oliv. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

Chas. What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life?

Sir Oliv. No, indeed I am not; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

Chas. There again, now, you are misinformed. No, no, the climate has hurt him considerably, poor uncle Oliver. Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him.

Sir Oliv. No! Ha! ha! ha! so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him! Ha! ha! ha! egad—ha! ha! ha!

Chas. Ha! ha!—you're glad to hear that, little Premium?

Sir Oliv. No, no, I'm not.

Chas. Yes, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha!—you know that mends your chance.

Sir Oliv. But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over; nay, some say he is actually arrived.

Chas. Psha! sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no, rely on't he's at this moment at Calcutta. Isn't he, Moses?

Mos. Oh, yes, certainly.

Sir Oliv. Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good authority. Haven't I, Moses?

Mos. Yes, most undoubted!

Sir Oliv. But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing you could dispose of?

Chas. How do you mean?

Sir Oliv. For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate.

Chas. O Lud! that's gone long ago. Moses can tell you how better than I can.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Good lack! all the family race-cups and corporation-bowls!—[*Aloud.*] Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and compact.

Chas. Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Mercy upon me! learning that had run in the family like an heir-loom!—[*Aloud.*] Pray, what has become of the books?

Chas. You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

Mos. I know nothing of books.

Sir Oliv. So, so, nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

Chas. Not much, indeed; unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a room full of ancestors above: and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have 'em a bargain!

Sir Oliv. Hey! what the devil! sure, you wouldn't sell your forefathers, would you?

Chas. Every man of them, to the best bidder.

Sir Oliv. What! your great-uncles and aunts?

Chas. Ay, and my great-grandfathers and grandmothers too.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Now I give him up!—[*Aloud.*] What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred? Odd's life! do you take me for Shylock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood?

Chas. Nay, my little broker, don't be angry: what need you care, if you have your money's worth?

Sir Oliv. Well, I'll be the purchaser: I think I can dispose of the family canvas.—[*Aside.*] Oh, I'll never forgive him this! never!

Re-enter CARELESS.

Care. Come, Charles, what keeps you?

Chas. I can't come yet. I'faith, we are going to have a sale above stairs; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors!

Care. Oh, burn your ancestors!

Chas. No, he may do that afterwards, if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you: egad, you shall be auctioneer—so come along with us.

Care. Oh, have with you, if that's the case. I can handle a hammer as well as a dice box! Going! going!

Sir Oliv. Oh, the profligates! [*Aside.*

Chas. Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium, you don't seem to like the business?

Sir Oliv. Oh, yes, I do, vastly! Ha! ha! ha! yes, yes, I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction—ha! ha!—[*Aside.*] Oh, the prodigal!

Chas. To be sure! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations? [*Exeunt.*

Sir Oliv. I'll never forgive him; never! never!

ACT IV

SCENE I

A Picture Room in CHARLES SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter CHARLES, SIR OLIVER, MOSES, *and* CARELESS.

Chas. Walk in, gentlemen, pray walk in; —here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the Conquest.

Sir Oliv. And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Chas. Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting; no *volontière grace* or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Sir Oliv. Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

Chas. I hope not. Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family. But come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

Care. Ay, ay, this will do. But, Charles, I haven't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

Chas. Egad, that's true. What parchment have we here? Oh, our genealogy in full. [*Taking pedigree down.*] Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany, here's the family tree for you, you rogue! This shall be your hammer, and now you may

knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

Sir Oliv. What an unnatural rogue!—an *ex post facto* parricide! [*Aside.*

Care. Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed;—faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain. Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going!

Chas. Bravo, Careless! Well, here's my great uncle, Sir Richard Ravelin, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet. What say you, Mr. Premium? look at him—there's a hero! not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipped captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What do you bid?

Sir Oliv. [*Aside to* Moses.] Bid him speak.

Mos. Mr. Premium would have you speak.

Chas. Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds!—[*Aloud.*] Very well, sir, I take him at that.

Chas. Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great-aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself!—[*Aloud.*] Five pounds ten—she's mine.

Chas. Knock down my aunt Deborah! Here, now, are two that were a sort of cousins of theirs.—You see, Moses, these pictures were done some time ago, when beaux wore wigs, and the ladies their own hair.

Sir Oliv. Yes, truly, head-dresses appear to have been a little lower in those days.

Chas. Well, take that couple for the same.

Mos. 'Tis a good bargain.

Chas. Careless!—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses?

Mos. Four guineas.

Chas. Four guineas! Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig.—Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

Sir Oliv. By all means.

Care. Gone!

Chas. And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of Parliament, and noted speakers; and, what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir Oliv. That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honor of Parliament.

Care. Well said, little Premium! I'll knock them down at forty.

Chas. Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Norwich: take him at eight pounds.

Sir Oliv. No, no; six will do for the mayor.

Chas. Come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen here into the bargain.

Sir Oliv. They're mine.

Chas. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen. But, plague on't! we shall be all day retailing in this manner; do let us deal wholesale: what say you, little Premium? Give me three hundred pounds for the rest of the family in the lump.

Care. Ay, ay, that will be the best way.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, anything to accommodate you; they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

Care. What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee?

Sir Oliv. Yes, sir, I mean that; though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

Chas. What, that? Oh; that's my uncle Oliver. 'Twas done before he went to India.

Care. Your uncle Oliver! Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw; an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance! an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium?

Sir Oliv. Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it is as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. But I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber?

Chas. No, hang it! I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] The rogue's my nephew after all!—[*Aloud.*] But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Chas. I'm sorry for't, for you certainly will not have it. Oons, haven't you got enough of them?

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] I forgive him everything!—[*Aloud.*] But, sir, when I take a whim in my head, I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

Chas. Don't tease me, master broker; I

tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] How like his father the dog is.—[*Aloud.*] Well, well, I have done.—[*Aside.*] I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a striking resemblance.—[*Aloud.*] Here is a draught for your sum.

Chas. Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds!

Sir Oliv. You will not let Sir Oliver go?

Chas. Zounds! no! I tell you, once more.

Sir Oliv. Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that another time. But give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses.

Chas. Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow!—But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen.

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

Chas. But, hold; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for, I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

Sir Oliv. I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

Chas. Ay, all but the little nabob.

Sir Oliv. You're fixed on that?

Chas. Peremptorily.

Sir Oliv. [*Aside.*] A dear extravagant rogue!—[*Aloud.*] Good day! Come, Moses.—[*Aside.*] Let me hear now who dares call him profligate! [*Exit with* Moses.

Care. Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with!

Chas. Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow.—Ha! here's Rowley.—Do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

Care. I will—but don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

Chas. Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them.

Care. Nothing else.

Chas. Ay, ay, never fear.—[*Exit* Careless.] So! this was an odd old fellow, indeed. Let me see, two-thirds of these five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. Fore Heaven! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for!—Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant.

[*Bows ceremoniously to the pictures.*

Enter Rowley.

Ha! old Rowley! egad, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Row. Yes, I heard they were a-going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

Chas. Why, there's the point! my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations; to be sure, 'tis very affecting; but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I?

Row. There's no making you serious a moment.

Chas. Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

Row. A hundred pounds! Consider only——

Chas. Gad's life, don't talk about it! poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and, if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money.

Row. Ah! there's the point! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb——

Chas. Be just before you're generous.—Why, so I would if I could; but Justice is an old hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity, for the soul of me.

Row. Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection——

Chas. Ay, ay, it's very true; but, hark'ee, Rowley, while I have, by Heaven I'll give; so, damn your economy! and now for hazard.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

The Parlor.

Enter Sir Oliver *and* Moses.

Mos. Well sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory—'tis great pity he's so extravagant.

Sir Oliv. True—but he would not sell my picture—

Mos. And loves wine and women so much—

Sir Oliv. But he wouldn't sell my picture.

Mos. And game so deep—

Sir Oliv. But he wouldn't sell my picture. O, here's Rowley!

Enter Rowley.

Row. So, Sir Oliver. I find you have made a purchase——

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry—sold judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

Row. And here has he commissioned me to re-deliver you part of the purchase-money

—I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley——

Mos. Ah! there is the pity of all! He is so damned charitable.

Row. And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy 'em.

Sir Oliv. Well—well—I'll pay his debts and his benevolences too—I'll take care of old Stanley—myself. But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as Stanley——

Row. Not yet a while; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter Trip.

Trip. O, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out—this way; Moses, a word.

[*Exit* Trip *with* Moses.

Sir Oliv. There's a fellow for you! Would you believe it that puppy intercepted the Jew, on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master!

Row. Indeed!

Sir Oliv. Yes; they are now planning an annuity business. Ah, Master Rowley, in my day servants were content with the follies of their masters when they were worn a little threadbare, but now they have their vices like their birthday clothes with the gloss on. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

A Library.

Surface *and* Servant.

Surf. No letter from Lady Teazle?

Serv. No, sir.

Surf. I am surprised she hasn't sent if she is prevented from coming! Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me, yet I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself in with the wife. However, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favor.

Serv. Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle—

Surf. Hold! see whether it is or not before you go to the door; I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.

Serv. 'Tis her ladyship, sir. She always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

Surf. Stay, stay, draw that screen before the window—that will do; my opposite neighbor is a maiden lady of so curious a temper!—[Servant *draws the screen and exit.*] I have a difficult hand to play in this affair; Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria, but she must by no means be let into that secret, at least till I have her more in my power.

Enter Lady Teazle.

Lady Teaz. What! sentiment in soliloquy; have you been very impatient now? O Lud! don't pretend to look grave—I vow I couldn't come before.

Surf. O madam, punctuality is a species of constancy, a very unfashionable quality in a lady.

Lady Teaz. Upon my word you ought to pity me; do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-tempered to me of late; and so jealous! of Charles, too;—that's the best of the story, isn't it?

Surf. I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up. [*Aside.*

Lady Teaz. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced,—don't you, Mr. Surface?

Surf. Indeed I do not. [*Aside.*] O certainly I do, for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

Lady Teaz. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you; besides I really never could perceive why she should have so many admirers.

Surf. O for her fortune—nothing else.

Lady Teaz. I believe so, for tho' she is certainly very pretty, yet she has no conversation in the world, and is so grave and reserved that I declare I think she'd have made an excellent wife for Sir Peter.

Surf. So she would.

Lady Teaz. Then—one never hears her speak ill of anybody—which you know is mighty dull.

Surf. Yet she doesn't want understanding.

Lady Teaz. No more she does—yet one is always disappointed when one hears her speak. For though her eyes have no kind of meaning in them, she very seldom talks nonsense.

Surf. Nay, nay, surely—she has very fine eyes.

Lady Teaz. Why, so she has—tho' sometimes one fancies there's a little sort of a squint.

Surf. A squint—O fie—Lady Teazle.

Lady Teaz. Yes, yes, I vow now—come, there is a left-handed Cupid in one eye—that's the truth on't.

Surf. Well, his aim is very direct however,—but Lady Sneerwell has quite corrupted you.

Lady Teaz. No, indeed, I have not opinion enough of her to be taught by her, and I know that she has lately raised many scandalous hints of me—which you know one always hears from one common friend or other.

Surf. Why, to say truth, I believe you are not more obliged to her than others of her acquaintance.

Lady Teaz. But isn't it provoking to hear the most ill-natured things said to one, and there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation, too; that's what vexes me.

Surf. Aye, madam, to be sure that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation—yes, yes—there's the mortification indeed—for when a slanderous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

Lady Teaz. No, to be sure; then I'd forgive their malice—but to attack me, who am really so innocent and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody—that is, of any friend—! and then Sir Peter too—to have him so peevish—and so suspicious—when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed 'tis monstrous.

Surf. But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it—when a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife and withdraws his confidence from her—the original compact is broke and she owes it to the honor of her sex to endeavor to outwit him.

Lady Teaz. Indeed! So that if he suspects me without cause, it follows that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't.

Surf. Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you—and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

Lady Teaz. To be sure what you say is very reasonable—and when the consciousness of my own innocence——

Surf. Ah, my dear—madam, there is the great mistake—'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms and careless of the world's opinion?—why, the consciousness of your innocence—what makes you thoughtless in your conduct and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences?—why, the consciousness of your innocence—what makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions?—why, the consciousness of your own innocence—

Lady Teaz. 'Tis very true.

Surf. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you but once make a trifling *faux pas,* you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humor and agree with your husband.

Lady Teaz. Do you think so?

Surf. O, I'm sure on't; and then you'd find all scandal would cease at once, for in short your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying of too much health.

Lady Teaz. So—so—then I perceive your prescription is that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation.

Surf. Exactly so upon my credit, ma'am.

Lady Teaz. Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine—and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny.

Surf. An infallible one, believe me—prudence like experience must be paid for.

Lady Teaz. Why, if my understanding were once convinced——

Surf. Oh, certainly madam, your understanding *should* be convinced—yes—yes—Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you *thought* wrong—no—no—I have too much honor to desire it.

Lady Teaz. Don't—you think we may as well leave honor out of the argument?

[*Rises.*

Surf. Ah—the ill effects of your country education I see still remain with you.

Lady Teaz. I doubt they do indeed—and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong it would be by Sir Peter's ill-usage—sooner than your honorable logic, after all.

Surf. Then by this hand, which he is unworthy of——

Enter SERVANT.

Sdeath, you blockhead, what do you want?

Serv. I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you wouldn't choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him?

Surf. Sir Peter—Oons—the devil!

Lady Teaz. Sir Peter! O Lud! I'm ruined! I'm ruined!

Serv. Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

Lady Teaz. O, I'm undone! what will become of me now, Mr. Logic?—Oh! mercy, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again——

[*Goes behind the screen—*

Surf. Give me that—book!——

[*Sits down—*SERVANT *pretends to adjust his hair—*

Enter SIR PETER.

Sir Pet. Aye—ever improving himself!—Mr. Surface—

Surf. Oh! my dear Sir Peter—I beg your pardon—[*Gaping and throws away the book.*] I have been dozing over a stupid book! well—I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books you know are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

Sir Pet. 'Tis very neat indeed; well, well, that's proper—and you make even your

screen a source of knowledge—hung I perceive with maps—

Surf. O yes—I find great use in that screen.

Sir Pet. I dare say you must; certainly, when you want to find out anything in a hurry.

Surf. Aye or to hide anything in a hurry either.

Sir Pet. Well, I have a little private business—if we were alone—

Surf. You needn't stay.

Serv. No, sir. [*Exit* Servant.

Surf. Here's a chair, Sir Peter, I beg——

Sir Pet. Well, now we are alone, there *is* a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburthen my mind to you—a point of the greatest moment to my peace—in short, my good friend—Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

Surf. Indeed, I'm very sorry to hear it.

Sir Pet. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me—but what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suspect that she must have formed an attachment to another.

Surf. Indeed! you astonish me.

Sir Pet. Yes—and between ourselves—I think I have discovered the person.

Surf. How—you alarm me exceedingly!

Sir Pet. Ah! my dear friend, I knew you would sympathize with me.

Surf. Yes—believe me, Sir Peter—such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you—

Sir Pet. I am convinced of it; ah, it is a happiness to have a friend whom one can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

Surf. I haven't the most distant idea; it can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite.

Sir Pet. O, no. What say you to Charles?

Surf. My brother—impossible!—O no, Sir Peter, you mustn't credit the scandalous insinuations you hear—no, no;—Charles to be sure has been charged with many things, but I can never think he would meditate so gross an injury.

Sir Pet. Ah! my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you—you judge of others by yourself.

Surf. Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slowest to credit another's treachery.

Sir Pet. True—but your brother has no sentiment—you never hear him talk so.

Surf. Well, there certainly is no knowing what men are capable of—no—there is no knowing—yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

Sir Pet. Aye, but what's principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow?

Surf. That's very true.

Sir Pet. And then you know the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any great affection for me—and if she were to be frail and I were to make it public—why, the town would only laugh at the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

Surf. That's true; to be sure people would laugh.

Sir Pet. Laugh—aye, and make ballads and paragraphs and the devil knows what of me.

Surf. No, you must never make it public.

Sir Pet. But then again that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such an injury—hurts me more nearly.

Surf. Undoubtedly; when Ingratitude barbs the dart of Injury, the wound has double danger in it.

Sir Pet. Aye, I that was in a manner left his guardian—in [whose] house he had been so often entertained—who never in my life denied him my advice—

Surf. O, 'tis not to be credited. There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure—but for my part till you can give me positive proofs you must excuse me withholding my belief. However, if this should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine, I disclaim kindred with him—for the man who can break thro' the laws of hospitality and attempt the wife of his friend deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

Sir Pet. What a difference there is between you! what noble sentiments!

Surf. But I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honor.

Sir Pet. I'm sure I wish to think well of her and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her, and, in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall be her own mistress in that respect for the future; and if I were to die, she shall find that I have not been inattentive to her interests while living. Here, my friend, are the draughts of two deeds which I wish to have your opinion on: by one she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live, and by the other the bulk of my fortune after my death.

Surf. This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous! I wish it may not corrupt my pupil. [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, tho' I would not

have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

Surf. Nor I—if I could help it.

Sir Pet. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

Surf. No, no, Sir Peter,—another time if you please—[*softly.*]

Sir Pet. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affection.

Surf. I beg you will not mention it. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate [*softly*]. 'Sdeath, I shall be ruined every way.

Sir Pet. And tho' you are so averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with *your* passion, I am sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

Surf. Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never——

Enter Servant.

Well, sir?

Serv. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you're within.

Surf. 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm *not* within,—I'm out for the day.

Sir Pet. Stay—hold—a thought has struck me; you shall be at home.

Surf. Well—well—let him up.—[*Exit* Serv.] He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however. [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. Now, my good friend, oblige me I intreat you—before Charles comes—let me conceal myself somewhere—then do you tax him on the point we have been talking on, and his answers may satisfy me at once.

Surf. O, fie, Sir Peter, would you have *me* join in so mean a trick? to trepan my brother too?

Sir Pet. Nay, you tell me you are *sure* he is innocent;—if so, you do him the greatest service in giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me—here behind this screen will be—hey! what the devil—there seems to be one listener here already;—I'll swear I saw a petticoat.—

Surf. Ha! ha! ha! Well, this is ridiculous enough—I'll tell you, Sir Peter—though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet you know it doesn't follow that a man is to be an absolute Joseph either;—harkee, 'tis a little French milliner—a silly rogue that plagues me—and having some character, on your coming she ran behind the screen.

Sir Pet. Ah, a rogue—but 'egad she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

Surf. O 'twill never go any farther, you may depend on't.

Sir Pet. No!—then, efaith, let her hear it out.—Here's a closet will do as well.

Surf. Well, go in there.

Sir Pet. Sly rogue—sly rogue.

Surf. Gad's my life, what an escape! and a curious situation I'm in!—to part man and wife in this manner.

Lady Teaz. [*peeps out.*] Couldn't I steal off?

Surf. Keep close, my angel!

Sir Pet. [*Peeping out.*] Joseph, tax him home.

Surf. Back—my dear friend.

Lady Teaz. [*Peeping out.*] Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?—

Surf. Be still—my life!

Sir Pet. [*Peeping.*] You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

Surf. In! in! my good Sir Peter—'Fore Gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

Enter Charles.

Chas. Hollo! brother—what has been the matter? your fellow wouldn't let me up at first—What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

Surf. Neither, brother, I assure you.

Chas. But—what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you—

Surf. He *was,* brother, but hearing you were coming he didn't choose to stay.

Chas. What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Surf. No, sir, but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

Chas. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men;—but how so, pray?

Surf. To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavoring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

Chas. Who, I?—O Lud! not I upon my word.—Ha! ha! ha! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he? or what's worse she has discovered that she has an old husband?

Surf. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh——

Chas. True, true, as you were going to say—then seriously I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honor.

Surf. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this.

Chas. [*Aloud.*] To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy—but upon my soul I never gave her the least

encouragement.—Besides you know my attachment to Maria—

Surf. But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you——

Chas. Why—look'ee, Joseph—I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonorable action—but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way—and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father——

Surf. Well?

Chas. Why I believe I should be obliged to borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But, brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly by naming me with Lady Teazle—for faith I always understood *you* were her favorite—

Surf. O for shame! Charles. This retort is foolish.

Chas. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances——

Surf. Nay—nay—sir—this is no jest—

Chas. Egad, I'm serious. Don't you remember one day, when I called here?——

Surf. Nay—prithee—Charles—

Chas. And found you together——

Surf. Zounds, sir, I insist——

Chas. And another time when your servant——

Surf. Brother, brother, a word with you—Gad, I must stop him— [*Aside.*

Chas. Informed me that——

Surf. Hush!—I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying; I knew you would clear yourself, or I shouldn't have consented—

Chas. How? Sir Peter?—Where is he?

Surf. Softly, there! [*Points to the closet.*

Chas. In the closet! O 'fore Heaven, I'll have him out!—Sir Peter, come forth!

Surf. No—no——

Chas. I say, Sir Peter—come into court.—[*Pulls in* Sir Peter.] What—my old guardian—what! turn inquisitor and take evidence incog.—

Sir Pet. Give me your hand, Charles; I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph—'twas my plan—

Chas. Indeed!

Sir Pet. But I acquit you; I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did. What I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

Chas. Egad, then 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more, wasn't it, Joseph?

Sir Pet. Ah! you would have retorted on him.

Chas. Aye—aye—that was a joke.

Sir Pet. Yes, yes, I know his honor too well.

Chas. Yet you might as well have suspected him as me in this matter, for all that, mightn't he, Joseph?

Sir Pet. Well, well, I believe you.

Surf. Would they were both out of the room!

Enter Servant, *whispers* Surface.

Sir Pet. And in future perhaps we may not be such strangers.

Surf. Gentlemen—I beg pardon—I must wait on you downstairs,—here is a person come on particular business——

Chas. Well, you can see him in another room; Sir Peter and I haven't met a long time and I have something to say to him.

Surf. They must not be left together.—I'll send this man away and return directly—

[Surface *goes out.*

Sir Pet. Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well! there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment!

Chas. Pshaw! he is too moral by half, and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it, that I suppose he would as soon let a priest in his house as a girl.

Sir Pet. No, no, come, come, you wrong him. No, no, Joseph is no rake but he is no such saint in that respect either. I have a great mind to tell him—we should have such a laugh!

Chas. Oh, hang him! He's a very anchorite—a young hermit.

Sir Pet. Harkee, you must not abuse him, he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

Chas. Why, you won't tell him?

Sir Pet. No—but—this way. Egad, I'll tell him.—Harkee, have you a mind to have a good laugh against Joseph?

Chas. I should like it of all things.

Sir Pet. Then, E'faith, we will—I'll be quit with him for discovering me.—He had a girl with him when I called. [*Whispers.*

Chas. What! Joseph! you jest.

Sir Pet. Hush!—a little French milliner—and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

Chas. The devil she is!

Sir Pet. Hush! I tell you. [*Points.*

Chas. Behind the screen! Odds life, let's unveil her!

Sir Pet. No—no! he's coming—you shan't indeed!

Chas. Oh, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner!

Sir Pet. Not for the world—Joseph will never forgive me.

Chas. I'll stand by you——

Sir Pet. Odds life! Here he's coming—

[Surface *enters just as* Charles *throws down the screen.*

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Chas. Lady Teazle! by all that's wonderful!

Sir Pet. Lady Teazle! by all that's horrible!

Chas. Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw!—Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek—and I don't see who is out of the secret!—Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me?—Not a word!—Brother!—will you please to explain this matter? What! is Honesty dumb too?—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark—perhaps you are not so now—all mute? Well tho' I can make nothing of the affair, I make no doubt but you perfectly understand one another,—so I'll leave you to yourselves.—[*Going.*] Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness!—Sir Peter—there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment!—

[*Stand for some time looking at one another. Exit* CHARLES.

Surf. Sir Peter—notwithstanding I confess that appearances are against me, if you will afford me your patience, I make no doubt but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.

Sir Pet. If you please—sir—

Surf. The fact is, sir—that Lady Teazle knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria—I say, sir, Lady Teazle—being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper—and knowing my friendship to the family,—she, sir—I say called here—in order that I might explain those pretensions—but on your coming being apprehensive—as I said, of your jealousy—she withdrew—and this, you may depend on't, is the whole truth of the matter.

Sir Pet. A very clear account upon my word and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

Lady Teaz. For not one word of it, Sir Peter—

Sir Pet. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie?

Lady Teaz. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

Sir Pet. I believe you upon my soul, ma'am—

Surf. 'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me! [*Aside.*

Lady Teaz. Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave I will speak for myself.

Sir Pet. Aye, let her alone, sir—you'll find she'll make out a better story than you without prompting.

Lady Teaz. Hear me, Sir Peter. I came hither on no matter relating to your ward and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her—but I came—seduced by his insidious arguments and pretended passion—at least to listen to his dishonorable love if not to sacrifice your honor to his baseness.

Sir Pet. Now, I believe, the truth is coming indeed.

Surf. The woman's mad—

Lady Teaz. No, sir, she has recovered her senses. Your own arts have furnished her with the means. Sir Peter—I do not expect you to credit me—but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has penetrated so to my heart that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude;—as for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend while he pretended honorable addresses to his ward, I behold him now in a light so truly despicable that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him. [*Exit.*

Surf. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter—Heaven knows——

Sir Pet. That you are a villain!—and so I leave you to your conscience.

Surf. You are too rash, Sir Peter—you *shall* hear me.—The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to——

[*Exeunt,* SURFACE *following and speaking.*

ACT V

SCENE I

The Library.

Enter SURFACE *and* SERVANT.

Surf. Mr. Stanley! and why should you think I would see him?—you must know he came to ask something!

Serv. Sir, I shouldn't have let him in but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

Surf. Pshaw!—Blockhead to suppose that I should now be in a temper to receive visits from poor relations!—well, why don't you show the fellow up?

Serv. I will, sir! why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady——

Surf. Go, fool! [*Exit* SERV.] Sure Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before—my character with Sir Peter!—my hopes with Maria!—destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humor to listen to other people's distresses! I shan't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So! here he comes and Rowley with him—I *must* try to recover myself, and put a little charity into my face however. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir Oliver *and* Rowley.

Sir Oliv. What! does he avoid us? that was he, was it not?

Row. It was, sir, but I doubt you are come a little too abruptly—his nerves are so weak that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him—I should have gone first to break you to him.

Sir Oliv. A plague of his nerves! yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

Row. As to his way of thinking—I can't pretend to decide, for, to do him justice, he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom—though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

Sir Oliv. Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments, I suppose, at his fingers' ends!

Row. Or rather at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has more faith in than that 'charity begins at home.'

Sir Oliv. And his I presume is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

Row. I doubt you'll find it so—but he's coming—I mustn't seem to interrupt you—and you know immediately, as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

Sir Oliv. True, and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's——

Row. Without losing a moment. [*Exit.*

Sir Oliv. So—I see he has premeditated a denial by the complaisance of his features.

Enter Surface.

Surf. Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting—Mr. Stanley—I presume——

Sir Oliv. At your service.

Surf. Sir, I beg you will do me the honor to sit down—I entreat you, sir.

Sir Oliv. Dear sir, there's no occasion—too civil by half!

Surf. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley, but I am extremely happy to see you look so well; you were nearly related to my mother, I think, Mr. Stanley.

Sir Oliv. I was, sir, so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

Surf. Dear sir, there needs no apology; he that is in distress, tho' a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

Sir Oliv. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend——

Surf. I wish he was, sir, with all my heart—you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

Sir Oliv. I should not need one—my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty had enabled you to become the agent of his charity.

Surf. My dear sir, you are strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man, a worthy man—a very worthy sort of man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age—I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence:—what he has done for me has been a mere—nothing; tho' people, I know, have thought otherwise, and for my part I never chose to contradict the report.

Sir Oliv. What!—has he never transmitted you bullion—rupees—pagodas?

Surf. O dear sir, nothing of the kind! no, no—a few presents now and then—china, shawls, congo tea, avadavats, and Indian crackers, little more, believe me.

Sir Oliv. Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds!—avadavats and Indian crackers.

Surf. Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother. Sir, there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

Sir Oliv. Not I for one!

Surf. The sums I have lent him! Indeed, I have been exceedingly to blame—it was an amiable weakness! however, I don't pretend to defend it; and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the power of serving *you*, Mr. Stanley, as my heart directs——

Sir Oliv. Dissembler! Then, sir, you cannot assist me?

Surf. At present it grieves me to say I cannot—but whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

Sir Oliv. I am extremely sorry——

Surf. Not more than I am, believe me; to pity without the power to relieve is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

Sir Oliv. Kind sir, your most obedient, humble servant.

Surf. You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley; William, be ready to open the door.

Sir Oliv. O, dear sir, no ceremony——

Surf. Your very obedient——

Sir Oliv. Your most obsequious——

Surf. You may depend on hearing from me whenever I can be of service——

Sir Oliv. Sweet sir, you are too good——

Surf. In the mean time I wish you health and spirits——

Sir Oliv. Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant——

Surf. Sir, yours as sincerely——

Sir Oliv. Charles!—you are my heir.

[*Exit.*

SURFACE, *solus.*

Soh!—This is one bad effect of a good character—it invites applications from the unfortunate and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities, whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it makes just as good a show, and pays no tax.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. Mr. Surface, your servant. I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands immediate attention, as this note will inform you.

Surf. Always happy to see Mr. Rowley. How—Oliver—Surface!—My uncle arrived!

Row. He is indeed—we have just parted—quite well—after a speedy voyage—and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

Surf. I am astonished!—William! stop Mr. Stanley, if he's not gone.

Row. O—he's out of reach, I believe.

Surf. Why didn't you let me know this when you came in together.

Row. I thought you had particular—business; but I must be gone to inform your brother, and appoint him here to meet his uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

Surf. So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming—never to be sure was anything so damned unlucky!

Row. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

Surf. O, I'm rejoiced to hear it—just at this time——

Row. I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

Surf. Do—do—pray—give my best duty and affection—indeed, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him!—certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill fortune——

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

At SIR PETER'S *House.*

Enter MRS. CANDOUR *and* SERVANT.

Serv. Indeed, ma'am, my Lady will see nobody at present.

Mrs. Can. Did you tell her it was her friend, Mrs. Candour?

Serv. Yes, ma'am, but she begs you will excuse her.

Mrs. Can. Do go again—I shall be glad to see her if it be only for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress [*Exit* MAID]—Dear heart, how provoking!—I'm not mistress of half the circumstances!—We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers with the names of the parties at length before I have dropt the story at a dozen houses.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN.

Sir Benjamin, you have heard, I suppose——

Sir Ben. Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface——

Mrs. Can. And Sir Peter's discovery——

Sir Ben. O the strangest piece of business to be sure——

Mrs. Can. Well, I never was so surprised in my life!—am so sorry for all parties—indeed.

Sir Ben. Now, I don't pity Sir Peter at all; he was so extravagant—partial to Mr. Surface——

Mrs. Can. Mr. Surface!—why, 'twas with Charles Lady Teazle was detected.

Sir Ben. No such thing! Mr. Surface is the gallant.

Mrs. Can. No, no, Charles is the man; 'twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

Sir Ben. I tell you I have it from one——

Mrs. Can. And I have it from one——

Sir Ben. Who had it from one who had it——

Mrs. Can. From one immediately—but here comes Lady Sneerwell—perhaps she knows the whole affair.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

Lady Sneer. So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Teazle.

Mrs. Can. Aye, my dear friend, who could have thought it?

Lady Sneer. Well, there is no trusting to appearances; though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

Mrs. Can. To be sure, her manners were a little too free—but she was very young——

Lady Sneer. And had indeed some good qualities.

Mrs. Can. So she had indeed—but have you heard the particulars?

Lady Sneer. No, but everybody says that Mr. Surface——

Sir Ben. Aye, there I told you—Mr. Surface was the man.

Mrs. Can. No, no, indeed the assignation was with Charles——

Lady Sneer. With Charles!—You alarm me, Mrs. Candour!

Mrs. Can. Yes, yes, he was the lover; Mr. Surface—do him justice—was only the informer.

Sir Ben. Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour—but be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not——

Mrs. Can. Sir Peter's wound! O mercy! I didn't hear a word of their fighting——

Lady Sneer. Nor I a syllable!

Sir Ben. No! what, no mention of the duel?

Mrs. Can. Not a word—

Sir Ben. O, Lord, yes, yes, they fought before they left the room.

Lady Sneer. Pray, let us hear.

Mrs. Can. Aye—do oblige us with the duel——

Sir Ben. 'Sir,' says Sir Peter—immediately after the discovery, 'you are a most ungrateful fellow.'

Mrs. Can. Aye to Charles——

Sir Ben. No, no—to Mr. Surface—'a most ungrateful fellow; and old as I am, sir,' says he, 'I insist on immediate satisfaction.'

Mrs. Can. Aye, that must have been to Charles, for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface should go to fight in his own house.

Sir Ben. Gad's life, ma'am, not at all—'giving me immediate satisfaction'—on this, madam—Lady Teazle seeing Sir Peter in such danger—ran out of the room in strong hysterics—and Charles after her calling out for hartshorn and water! Then, madam, they began to fight with swords——

Enter Crabtree.

Crab. With pistols, nephew, I have it from undoubted authority.

Mrs. Can. Oh, Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true——

Crab. Too true indeed, ma'am, and Sir Peter dangerously wounded——

Sir Ben. By a thrust in second—quite through his left side.

Crab. By a bullet lodged in the thorax——

Mrs. Can. Mercy—on me! Poor Sir Peter——

Crab. Yes, ma'am, tho' Charles would have avoided the matter if he could——

Mrs. Can. I knew Charles was the person——

Sir Ben. O my uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter——

Crab. But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude——

Sir Ben. That I told you, you know——

Crab. Do, nephew, let me speak—and insisted on immediate——

Sir Ben. Just as I said——

Crab. Odds life! Nephew, allow others to know something too—A pair of pistols lay on the bureau—for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before late from Salt-Hill where he had been to see the Montem with a friend, who has a son at Eton—so unluckily the pistols were left charged——

Sir Ben. I heard nothing of this——

Crab. Sir Peter forced Charles to take one and they fired—it seems pretty nearly together—Charles's shot took place as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed—but what is very extraordinary the ball struck against a little bronze Pliny that stood over the fire place—grazed out of the window at a right angle—and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

Sir Ben. My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I must confess,—but I believe mine is the true one for all that.

Lady Sneer. I am more interested in this affair than they imagine—and must have better information.— [*Exit.*

Sir Ben. Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

Crab. Yes, yes, they certainly *do* say—but that's neither here nor there.

Mrs. Can. But pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

Crab. Oh! they brought him home and he is now in the house, tho' the servants are ordered to deny it.

Mrs. Can. I believe so—and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

Crab. Yes, yes, and I saw one of the Faculty enter just before me.

Sir Ben. Hey, who comes here?

Crab. Oh, this is he, the physician, depend on't.

Mrs. Can. O certainly, it must be the physician, and now we shall know——

Enter Sir Oliver.

Crab. Well, Doctor, what hopes?

Mrs. Can. Aye, Doctor, how's your patient?

Sir Ben. Now, Doctor, isn't it a wound with a small sword——

Crab. A bullet lodged in the thorax—for a hundred!

Sir Oliv. Doctor!—a wound with a small sword! and a bullet in the thorax!—Oons! are you mad, good people?

Sir Ben. Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor.

Sir Oliv. Truly, sir, I am to thank you for my degree if I am.

Crab. Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then, I presume; but, sir, you must have heard of this accident.

Sir Oliv. Not a word!

Crab. Not of his being dangerously wounded?

Sir Oliv. The devil he is!

Sir Ben. Run thro' the body——

Crab. Shot in the breast——

Sir Ben. By one Mr. Surface——

Crab. Aye, the younger.

Sir Oliv. Hey! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts; however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

Sir Ben. Oh yes, we agree in that.

Crab. Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt in that.

Sir Oliv. Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive, for here he comes walking as if nothing at all was the matter.

Enter Sir Peter.

Odd's heart, Sir Peter! you are come in good time I promise you, for we had just given you over!

Sir Ben. 'Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery!

Sir Oliv. Why, man, what do you do out of bed with a small sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

Sir Pet. A small sword and a bullet—

Sir Oliv. Aye, these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor to make me an accomplice.

Sir Pet. Why! what is all this?

Sir Ben. We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true—and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

Sir Pet. So, so,—all over the town already! [*Aside.*

Crab. Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at all at your years.

Sir Pet. Sir, what business is that of yours?

Mrs. Can. Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he's very much to be pitied.

Sir Pet. Plague on your pity, ma'am, I desire none of it.

Sir Ben. However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

Sir Pet. Sir, I desire to be master in my own house.

Crab. 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

Sir Pet. I insist on being left to myself, without ceremony,—I insist on your leaving my house directly!

Mrs. Can. Well, well, we are going and depend on't, we'll make the best report of you we can.

Sir Pet. Leave my house!

Crab. And tell how hardly you have been treated.

Sir Pet. Leave my house—

Sir Ben. And how patiently you bear it.

Sir Pet. Friends! Vipers! Furies! Oh that their own venom would choke them!

Sir Oliv. They are very provoking indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter Rowley.

Row. I heard high words: what has ruffled you, Sir Peter?

Sir Pet. Pshaw! what signifies asking—do I ever pass a day without my vexations?

Sir Oliv. Well, I'm not inquisitive—I come only to tell you that I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

Sir Pet. A precious couple they are!

Row. Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

Sir Oliv. Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man after all.

Row. Aye, as Sir Peter says, he's a man of sentiment.

Sir Oliv. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Row. It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

Sir Oliv. Oh, he's a model for the young men of the age! But how's this, Sir Peter? you don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise as I expected.

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

Row. What! do *you* say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life?

Sir Pet. Pshaw! Plague on you both—I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair—I shall go mad among you!

Row. Then to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humbled that she deigned to request *me* to be her advocate with you.

Sir Pet. And does Sir Oliver know all too?

Sir Oliv. Every circumstance!

Sir Pet. What of the closet and the screen—hey?

Sir Oliv. Yes, yes—and the little French milliner. Oh, I have been vastly diverted with the story! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. 'Twas very pleasant!

Sir Oliv. I never laughed more in my life, I assure you; ha! ha!

Sir Pet. O vastly diverting! Ha! ha!

Row. To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments! ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Yes, his sentiments! ha! ha! a hypocritical villain!

Sir Oliv. Aye, and that rogue Charles—to pull Sir Peter out of the closet, ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Ha! ha! 'twas devilish entertaining, to be sure.

Sir Oliv. Ha! ha! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down—ha! ha!

Sir Pet. Yes, my face when the screen

was thrown down: ha! ha! ha! O, I must never show my head again!

Sir Oliv. But come, come, it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend, tho' upon my soul I can't help it—

Sir Pet. O pray, don't restrain your mirth on my account: it does not hurt me at all—I laugh at the whole affair myself.—Yes—yes—I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation—O yes—and then of a morning to read the paragraphs about Mr. S——, Lady T——, and Sir P——, will be so entertaining!—I shall certainly leave town tomorrow and never look mankind in the face again!

Row. Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools. But I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room—I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

Sir Oliv. Perhaps *my* being here prevents her coming to you; well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's—where I am now returning—if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy.

Sir Pet. Ah! I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart; though 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries.

Sir Oliv. However, it is very convenient to the carrying on of my plot that you all live so near one another!

[*Exit* Sir Oliver.

Row. We'll follow—

Sir Pet. She is not coming here, you see, Rowley—

Row. No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive.—See she is in tears!

Sir Pet. She seems indeed to wish I should go to her. How dejected she appears!

Row. And will you refrain from comforting her?

Sir Pet. Certainly, a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little?

Row. O, this is ungenerous in you.

Sir Pet. Well, I know not what to think. You remember, Rowley, the letter I found of hers—evidently intended for Charles?

Row. A mere forgery, Sir Peter, laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction on.

Sir Pet. I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way——what a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has! Rowley, I'll go to her.

Row. Certainly—

Sir Pet. Tho' when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more!

Row. Let them laugh—and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

Sir Pet. Efaith, so I will—and if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the country.

Row. Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion——

Sir Pet. Hold, Master Rowley, if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment. I have had enough of *them* to serve me the rest of my life. [*Exeunt.*

Scene the Last

The Library.

Surface *and* Lady Sneerwell.

Lady Sneer. Impossible! will not Sir Peter immediately be reconciled to *Charles?* and of consequence no longer oppose his union with *Maria?* The thought is distraction to me!

Surf. Can passion furnish a remedy?

Lady Sneer. No, nor cunning either. O I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer!

Surf. Surely, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer—yet you see I bear the accident with calmness.

Lady Sneer. Because the disappointment hasn't reached your *heart;* your interest only attached you to Maria; had you felt for her what I have for that ungrateful libertine, neither your temper nor hypocrisy could prevent your showing the sharpness of your vexation.

Surf. But why should your reproaches fall on me for this disappointment?

Lady Sneer. Are not you the cause of it? what had you to bate in your pursuit of Maria to pervert Lady Teazle by the way?—had you not a sufficient field for your roguery in blinding Sir Peter and supplanting your brother? I hate such an avarice of crimes; 'tis an unfair monopoly and never prospers.

Surf. Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated neither.

Lady Sneer. No!

Surf. You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met—and that you still believe him faithful to us.

Lady Sneer. I do believe so.

Surf. And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honor to your ladyship, which some of

his former letters to you will serve to support—

Lady Sneer. This, indeed, might have assisted—

Surf. Come, come, it is not too late yet; but hark! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver; retire to that room—we'll consult further when he's gone.

Lady Sneer. Well, but if *he* should find you out too—

Surf. O, I have no fear of that—Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit sake—and you may depend on't, I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!—

Lady Sneer. I have no diffidence of your abilities—only be constant to one roguery at a time. [*Exit.*

Surf. I will, I will. So 'tis confounded hard after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly—hey—what!—this is not Sir Oliver—but old Stanley again!—Plague on't, that he should return to teaze me just now;—I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here—and——

Enter SIR OLIVER.

Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? you must not stay now upon my word!

Sir Oliv. Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and tho' he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

Surf. Sir! 'tis impossible for you to stay now; so I must beg——come any other time and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

Sir Oliv. No—Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted—

Surf. Zounds, sir, then I insist on your quitting the room directly—

Sir Oliv. Nay, sir——

Surf. Sir, I insist on't. Here, William, show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir—not one moment—this is such insolence. [*Going to push him out.*

Enter CHARLES.

Chas. Heyday! what's the matter now? what the devil have you got hold of my little broker here! Zounds, brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter—my little fellow?

Surf. So! He has been with you, too, has he?

Chas. To be sure he has! Why, 'tis as honest a little—— But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you?

Surf. Borrowing—no!—But, brother, you know sure we expect Sir Oliver every——

Chas. O Gad, that's true—Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure—

Surf. Yet Mr. Stanley insists——

Chas. Stanley! why his name's Premium—

Surf. No, no, Stanley.

Chas. No, no, Premium.

Surf. Well, no matter which—but——

Chas. Aye, aye, Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing as you say—for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A. B's at the coffee-house. [*Knock.*

Surf. 'Sdeath, here's Sir Oliver at the door. Now, I beg, Mr. Stanley——

Chas. Aye, aye, and I beg, Mr. Premium——

Sir Oliv. Gentlemen——

Surf. Sir, by Heaven, you shall go—

Chas. Aye, out with him certainly——

Sir Oliv. This violence——

Surf. 'Tis your own fault.

Chas. Out with him, to be sure.

[*Both forcing* SIR OLIVER *out.*

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, LADY TEAZLE, MARIA, *and* ROWLEY.

Sir Pet. My old friend, Sir Oliver!—hey! what in the name of wonder!—Here are dutiful nephews!—assault their uncle at his first visit!

Lady Teaz. Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

Row. Truly it was, for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

Sir Oliv. Nor of Premium either. The necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman; and with the other I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

Surf. Charles!

Chas. Joseph!

Surf. 'Tis complete!

Chas. Very!

Sir Oliv. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty and you know also how gladly I would have looked on half my fortune as held in trust for him. Judge then my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude.

Sir Pet. Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be selfish, treacherous, and hypocritical.

Lady Teaz. And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call *me* to his character.

Sir Pet. Then I believe we need add no more. If he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment that he is known to the world.

Chas. If they talk this way to Honesty, what will they say to *me* by and bye?

Sir Oliv. As for that prodigal, his brother there——

Chas. Aye, now comes my turn—the damned family pictures will ruin me.

Surf. Sir Oliver, uncle, will you honor me with a hearing?

Chas. I wish Joseph now would make one of his long speeches and I might recollect myself a little.

Sir Oliv. And I suppose you would undertake to vindicate yourself entirely—

Surf. I trust I could—

Sir Oliv. Nay, if you desert your roguery in its distress and try to be justified, you have even less principle than I thought you had.—[*To* Charles Surface] Well, sir, and *you* could *justify* yourself too, I suppose?

Chas. Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

Sir Oliv. What! little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I presume.

Chas. True, sir, but they were family secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

Row. Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

Sir Oliv. Odd's heart, no more I can—nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors—sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china!

Chas. To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvas, that's the truth on't:—my ancestors may certainly rise in judgment against me, there's no denying it;—but believe me sincere when I tell you, and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not, that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

Sir Oliv. Charles—I believe you—give me your hand again: the ill-looking little fellow over the couch has made your peace.

Chas. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

Lady Teaz. [*Advancing.*] Yet I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to.

Sir Oliv. O, I have heard of his attachment there—and with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right that blush——

Sir Pet. Well, child, speak your sentiments; you know, we are going to be reconciled to Charles.

Mar. Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy. For me whatever claim I had to his affection, I willing resign to one who has a better title.

Chas. How, Maria!

Sir Pet. Heyday, what's the mystery now? while he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else, and now that he's likely to reform I'll warrant you won't have him!

Mar. His own heart—and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

Chas. Lady Sneerwell!

Surf. Brother, it is with great concern—I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice obliges me—and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed— [*Goes to the door.*

Enter Lady Sneerwell.

Sir Pet. Soh! another French milliner, egad! He has one in every room in the house, I suppose—

Lady Sneer. Ungrateful Charles! Well may you be surprised and feel for the indelicate situation which your perfidy has forced me into.

Chas. Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours? for as I have life, I don't understand it.

Surf. I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

Sir Pet. And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake. Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

Row. Walk in, Mr. Snake—

Enter Snake.

I thought his testimony might be wanted,—however it happens unluckily that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell and not to support her.

Lady Sneer. A villain!—Treacherous to me at last! Speak, fellow, have you too conspired against me?

Snake. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons,—you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question—but I unfortunately have been offered double to speak the truth.

Lady Sneer. The torments of shame and disappointment on you all!

Lady Teaz. Hold, Lady Sneerwell, before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken in writing letters from me to Charles and answering them yourself—and let me also request you to make my respects to the Scandalous College—of which you are President—and inform them that Lady Teazle, Licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her—as she leaves off practice and kills characters no longer.

Lady Sneer. Provoking — insolent! — may your husband live these fifty years! [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Oons, what a fury!

Lady Teaz. A malicious creature indeed!

Sir Pet. Hey—not for her last wish?—

Lady Teaz. O, no—

Sir Oliv. Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

Surf. Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner to impose on us all that I know not what to say.——However, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. [*Exit.*

Sir Pet. Moral to the last drop!

Sir Oliv. Aye, and marry her, Joseph, if you can.—Oil and vinegar egad:—you'll do very well together.

Row. I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake at present.

Snake. Before I go, I beg pardon once for all for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

Sir Pet. Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

Snake. But I must request of the company that it shall never be known.

Sir Pet. Hey!—what the plague—are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life?

Snake. Ah, sir, consider I live by the badness of my character!—I have nothing but my infamy to depend on!—and, if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

Sir Oliv. Well, well, we'll not traduce you by saying anything to your praise, never fear. [*Exit* SNAKE.

Sir Pet. There's a precious rogue.—Yet that fellow is a writer and a critic.

Lady Teaz. See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

Sir Oliv. Aye, aye, that's as it should be, and egad, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning—

Chas. Thank you, dear uncle!

Sir Pet. What! you rogue, don't you ask the girl's consent first?

Chas. Oh, I have done that a long time—above a minute ago—and she has looked yes—

Mar. For shame, Charles! I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word——

Sir Oliv. Well, then, the fewer the better—may your love for each other never know abatement.

Sir Pet. And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I—intend to do.

Chas. Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me and I suspect too that I owe you much.

Sir Oliv. You do, indeed, Charles.

Row. If my efforts to serve you had not succeeded, you would have been in my debt for the attempt;—but deserve to be happy—and you over-repay me.

Sir Pet. Aye, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

Chas. Why, as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises—and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it.—But here shall be my monitor, my gentle guide.—Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Tho' thou, dear maid, should'st waive thy beauty's sway,
—Thou still must rule—because I will obey:
An humbled fugitive from folly view,
No sanctuary near but love and *you:*
You can indeed each anxious fear remove,
For even scandal dies if you approve.
[*To the audience.*

EPILOGUE

By Mr. Colman

Spoken by Lady Teazle.

I, who was late so volatile and gay,
Like a trade-wind must now blow all one way,
Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
To one dull rusty weathercock—my spouse!
So wills our virtuous bard—the motley Bayes
Of crying epilogues and laughing plays!
Old bachelors, who marry smart young wives,
Learn from our play to regulate your lives:
Each bring his dear to town, all faults upon her—
London will prove the very source of honor.
Plunged fairly in, like a cold bath it serves,
When principles relax, to brace the nerves:
Such is my case; and yet I must deplore
That the gay dream of dissipation's o'er.
And say, ye fair! was ever lively wife,
Born with a genius for the highest life,
Like me untimely blasted in her bloom,
Like me condemned to such a dismal doom?
Save money—when I just knew how to waste it!
Leave London—just as I began to taste it!
Must I then watch the early crowing cock,
The melancholy ticking of a clock;
In a lone rustic hall for ever pounded,
With dogs, cats, rats, and squalling brats surrounded?
With humble curate can I now retire,
(While good Sir Peter boozes with the squire,)
And at backgammon mortify my soul,

That pants for loo, or flutters at a vole?
Seven's the main! Dear sound that must expire,
Lost at hot cockles round a Christmas fire;
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content!
Farewell the plumèd head, the cushioned tête,
That takes the cushion from its proper seat!
That spirit-stirring drum!—card drums I mean,
Spadille—odd trick—pam—basto—king and queen!
And you, ye knockers, that, with brazen throat,
The welcome visitors' approach denote;
Farewell all quality of high renown,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious town!
Farewell! your revels I partake no more,
And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er!
All this I told our bard; he smiled, and said 'twas clear,
I ought to play deep tragedy next year.
Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in these solemn periods stalked away:—
"Blessed were the fair like you; her faults who stopped,
And closed her follies when the curtain dropped!
No more in vice or error to engage,
Or play the fool at large on life's great stage."

NOTES

THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA

P. 10. *Mrs. Ellen Gwyn.* Nell Gwyn, who so captivated Charles II by her delivery of the Epilogue to *Tyrannic Love* that he immediately made her his mistress. She bore him a son on May 8, 1670, shortly before she acted the part of the virtuous Almahide in *The Conquest of Granada.*

t'other house's. The two theatrical companies were the King's at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, where *The Conquest of Granada* was acted, and the Duke's at the Dorset Garden Theatre. Nokes was a comedian in the latter company, and it is said that during the visit of the Duchess of Orleans and her suite to England in May, 1670, he caricatured French dress by means of a broad-brimmed hat.

two the best comedians. Nokes and Nell Gwyn, who, as actors of such comic parts, are mere "blocks" for hats.

P. 11. *To like.* As to like.

The flying skirmish of the darted cane. A game in which horsemen galloping from all sides throw at one another a wooden javelin about five feet long, called the jerid.

P. 12. *launched.* Pierced.

attend. Await, as often.

mirador. A turret or belvedere on the top of a Spanish house.

escapade. A fit of plunging and rearing.

ventanna. A window.

prevents. Anticipate, as often.

atabals. Kettle-drums.

P. 13. *ought.* Owed.

villain-blood. Low origin.

P. 14. *Xeriff.* The still reigning royal family of Morocco.

P. 15. *precarious.* Supplicating.

P. 16. *zambra.* A Moorish festival or feast, attended with dancing and music. Here it is the dance alone.

lost the tale, and took 'em by the great. Lost count and treated them as a whole.

bands. Bonds.

P. 17. *our triumphs.* Triumphs over us.

P. 19. *while.* Noyes suggests "till" as an emendation to meet the sense.

P. 21. *upon liking.* On approval or trial.

P. 24. "The quotation marks in the quartos and folio before these lines [near the top of first column] are evidently meant to emphasize them, or to point them out as suitable for quotation." (Noyes.)

P. 26. *Age sets to fortune.* Age gives a challenge to fortune, that is, will play only when it has a fortune on which it can risk the game, while youth will risk all, no matter what it has.

expect. Await.

P. 31. *out.* Without, outside. Cf. *Timon of Athens,* IV, i, 38, "Both within and out that wall."

equal. Impartial.
P. 32. *benefit.* Gift, favor.
P. 33. *retrenchment.* An inner line of defence within a large fortification.
P. 35. *deludes.* Eludes.
P. 36. *still.* Always, as often.
hardly. With difficulty.
your sight. The sight of you.
on another's hand. For another's advantage. (Saintsbury.)
still. Continually.
P. 38. *this year's delay.* Elapsed since the production of *Tyrannic Love,* Dryden's last play. Nell Gwyn was one of the women who were away for the reason indicated in the note to the Prologue.

ALL FOR LOVE

P. 43. *bate.* Abate.
Tonies. Fools, simpletons.
Hectors. Ruffians, later called "Scowerers" and "Mohocks." (See *New English Dictionary.*)
P. 44. *rivelled.* Wrinkled, shrivelled.
phocæ. Seals.
sea-horses. Hippopotami.
P. 45. *can.* "The absolute use of *can* is probably an affectation of archaism on Dryden's part." (Noyes.)
O, she dotes, etc. A reminiscence of *Midsummer Night's Dream,* I, i, 108-110.
P. 46. *eagerly.* Keenly, impatiently.
influence. "Flowing from stars of ethereal fluid, affecting character and destiny of man." (*N. E. D.*) Frequent in Shakspere.
vulgar fate. "If this be the phonetic spelling of *fête,* it is a far earlier example than any given in the *New English Dictionary.*" (Furness, *Antony and Cleopatra.*)
"*Enter a second Gentleman of M. Antony.*" Noyes' reading for "Re-enter the Gentleman of M. Antony." It is justified "by the following speech headings and by the fact that the Gentleman mentioned [a hundred lines above] has never left the stage."
P. 47. *I'm now turned wild,* etc. This passage is suggested by *As You Like It,* II, i, 29-57. (See Introduction.)
Art thou Ventidius? The distinction between "thou" and "you" seems to be preserved here as in Shakspere. See elsewhere in the play.
P. 48. *marches.* Boundaries, frontiers.
used. Accustomed.
P. 49. *O that thou wert my equal!* Antony's standard of honor, like that prevailing in the "heroic" plays, is made to accord with the sentiment of Dryden's own time.
P. 50. *May taste fate to them.* "May act as their tasters in fortune." A reference to the officer who guarded the great from poison by tasting all dishes at a feast.
The riming close of the act recalls the tags of scenes in Shakspere's plays.
P. 51. *fearful.* "Timid," as often in Shakspere.
close. Secret.
The fable of the wren, who mounted to heaven concealed in the eagle's feathers and thus outstripped the king of birds in his flight, had already been used by Dryden in 2 *Conquest of Granada,* V, ii, 126. The story is

told by Alexander Neckham, *De Naturis Rerum* (122), at the end of the twelfth century, a century before Rabbi Baradji Nikdani's version of *The Tale*, cited by Noyes. Grimm includes the fable in his collection.

P. 55. *I have refused a kingdom.* Noyes contrasts Cleopatra's loyalty to Antony here with the faithlessness of Shakspere's Queen (*Antony and Cleopatra*, III, xiii, 73-78.)

P. 56. *Phlegræan plains.* The place that was fabled to have witnessed the conflict between the gods and the earth-born Titans.

like Vulcan. A reference to the snaring of Venus and Mars by Vulcan. (*Odyssey*, VIII, 266-366.)

There's no satiety, etc. This is obviously suggested by *Antony and Cleopatra*, II, ii, 240.

my father Hercules. This allusion to the supposed ancestor of the Antonies is drawn not from Shakspere, but directly from Plutarch.

P. 57. *so one.* So in accord.

Her galley down the silver Cydnos, etc. Scott's preference for Dryden's description of Cleopatra's barge over Shakspere's more famous picture (*Antony and Cleopatra*, II, ii, 196-223) is "founded upon the easy flow of the verse . . . and the beauty of the language and imagery, which is flowing without diffusiveness and rapturous without hyperbole." This opinion is not shared by recent editors.

P. 59. *confess a man.* Admit yourself a man.

mistakes. Misjudgments.

P. 61. *want.* Lack.

P. 62. *Porc'pisce.* Porpoise. Editors suggest that Alexis, like the porpoise, messenger of tempests, is fat and probably black.

P. 63. *puts out.* Brings to surface.

Gallus. This great general was pitted by Octavius against Antony in Egypt. His passion for Lycoris (Cytheris) which inspired his elegies, now lost, is the subject of Vergil's tenth eclogue. Ovid speaks of Delia's poet, the far greater Tibullus, as the successor of Gallus and his companion in the Elysian fields.

P. 64. *Commerce.* Stressed as in Shakspere on the second syllable until early in the eighteenth century.

P. 65. *prove.* Test. So p. 70.

every man's Cleopatra. An obvious reminiscence of *Much Ado*, III, ii, 108, "Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero." See Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, II, x, 13-15, p. 310.

P. 68. *secure of injured faith.* "Safe from any breach of confidence." (Noyes.)

P. 70. *Egypt has been.* Cf. *Æneid*, II, 325, "Fuit Ilium."

in few. In brief.

This needed not. "This was not necessary."

P. 74. *I played booty with my life.* "To *play booty* is 'to allow one's adversary to win at cards at first, in order to induce him to continue playing and victimize him afterwards' (*Webster's International Dictionary*). Antony's meaning is that Cæsar will suspect him of a sham attempt at suicide, in order to win compassion from the conqueror." (Noyes.)

P. 76. *Mr. Bayes.* Here Dryden refers to the name given him by Buckingham in *The Rehearsal*. See the use of the name in the Epilogues of *She Stoops to Conquer* and *The School for Scandal*.

writ of ease. A certificate of discharge from employment. (*N. E. D.*)

THE COUNTRY WIFE

P. 84. *baffled scribbler.* The reference is to the failure of Wycherley's *The Gentleman Dancing Master,* which ran for only six days.

Castril. The angry boy in Jonson's *The Alchemist.*

Bayes's battles. Hart had acted the parts of the heroes in Dryden's heroic plays.

P. 85. *aniseed Robin.* A famous hermaphrodite, who after various adventures was hanged in 1659 at the age of 55.

occasional. Suited to the occasion.

P. 86. *Escole des Filles.* A licentious book in two parts and in dialogue form, first printed in Paris in 1655. The author's name is variously given as Mililot, Milot, and Hélot. The book was condemned to be burnt by the public executioner, and its author fled.

right. A slang term for *loose.*

passe-partout. One who is accepted everywhere.

probatum est. It has been tried.

P. 87. *vizard mask.* By metonymy for a prostitute, who in the time of the Restoration went masked.

Sir Martin Mar-all. Sir Martin, in Dryden's comedy of that name (1667), serenaded his mistress by pretending to play on the lute while his man, who is concealed, actually does so. The fraud is discovered by Martin's continuing to act after the music had ceased.

P. 88. *errantest cheat. Errant* means "wandering," and since it was so frequently applied to thieves, it came to be used as an intensive and to mean "downright." *Arrant* is the modern form.

Covent Garden. Originally the convent garden of the monks of Westminster, it was made into a fine square by Inigo Jones in 1640 for its owner, the Duke of Bedford, and till the middle of the eighteenth century was the abode of fashionable persons.

crowd. A fiddle.

Chateline's. A French ordinary in Covent Garden, much frequented by the wits. See Pepys's Diary, March 13 and April 22, 1668.

the Cock. The Cock Tavern in Bow Street, opposite Wycherley's lodging with the widow Hilton.

the Dog and Partridge. In Fleet Street (Summers). It is referred to in Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* as the Setting-Dog and Partridge.

P. 89. *Smithfield jade.* A worthless horse such as one might be cheated into buying at the Smithfield horse-market.

foiled. Fouled, or injured, as a horse, by foundering.

P. 90. *eighteen penny place.* The price of admission to the midgallery of the theatre was 18d. It was frequented by women of the town.

a Cheapside husband of a Covent-Garden wife. A citizen who marries a woman of fashion.

Mulberry Garden. Where Buckingham Palace is now. In 1609 James I planted mulberry trees there to encourage the silk industry. Charles II threw the garden open to the public. It was closed again about 1675. At the time of the play it was part of St. James's Park and was a fashionable resort.

The New Exchange. A building on the south side of the Strand. According to Timbs's *Curiosities of London,* it was "erected partly on the plan of the Royal Exchange, with vaults beneath, over which was an open paved arcade: and above were walks of shops, occupied by perfumers and publishers, milliners and sempstresses." It was a favorite place for assignations.

grum. Glum, moody.

fropish. Fretful, peevish.

P. 93. *bubble.* A dupe.

to my own freehold. I.e., Margery.

P. 95. *drolling.* Jesting.

fine. Pay a fine or composition.

wheedle. Swindle.

shocks. Rough-haired dogs. And the Victorian editors accepted the misprint *smocks!*

P. 98. *in ure.* In use.

snack. Share.

P. 99. *Hictius doctius.* A juggling formula, perhaps a perversion of *hic* (or *hicce*) *est doctus,* "this (or here) is the learned man."

Covent Garden Drollery. "*Covent Garden Drollery,* or A Collection of all the choice Songs, Poems, Prologues, and Epilogues, sung and spoken at Courts and Theatres. Written by the Refinedst Wits of the Age; and collected by A. B. Price, bound, 1s. . . ." 1672. (Summers.)

Tarugo's Wiles. Tarugo's Wiles; or, The Coffee-House, a comedy by Sir Thomas St. Serle, produced in 1667.

The Slighted Maiden. The Slighted Maid, a comedy by Sir Robert Stapleton (or Stapylton), produced in 1663.

P. 101. *She'll make no use. . . .* It is hard to make sense out of Lucy's criticism of her mistress. It appears to mean that Alithea will make no use of her fortune, her blessing, to win a gentleman, whom she would make a pure cuckold, for it requires good breeding to be a cuckold. Lucy evidently thinks Sparkish not enough of a gentleman to be worth making a cuckold—which gives us an idea of her standard of moral values.

eclaircissement. Explanation.

P. 104. *pulvillio.* A fine sweet-scented powder.

P. 105. *Lincoln's Inn Fields.* The fields west of Lincoln's Inn were laid out as a square. It was then a fashionable residence section and a favorite place for assignations.

St. James's Fields. "Formerly a part of the parish of St. Martin's in the Fields, it was made a separate parish, with a church consecrated in 1685 to St. James, in honor of the reigning monarch" (Churchill).

Pall Mall. At this time a fashionable residence street.

the canonical hour. The canonical hours during which a marriage might be performed were from 8 A.M. to noon.

P. 107. *Changeling.* A half-witted person.

P. 108. *evads.* Same as *I'vads,* "in faith."

P. 109. *curiously.* Neatly, carefully.

fadges. Succeeds.

squab. Squat.

P. 110. *china-house.* Frequently used as a place for assignations.

tomrigg. Tomboy.

P. 111. *roll-waggon.* A low-wheeled vehicle for conveying goods. (*N. E. D.*)

P. 112. *diffide in me.* Distrust me.

Lombard Street alderman. Lombard Street was the banking district of London. The courtier's civility was a prelude to a request for a loan.

Locket's. A famous tavern in Charing Cross, so called from its proprietor, Adam Locket, who died in 1688.

P. 113. *Piazza.* An open arcade on the north and east sides of Covent Garden, built by Inigo Jones in 1640. Here were fashionable residences for about a century.

dust it away. Toss it off.

P. 116. *paw.* Improper, obscene.

P. 118. *Lanterlu's.* Lanterloo was the name of a card game later known as loo. (Cf. Pope's *Rape of the Lock,* III, 62.) Here it is used as the name of a person.

P. 123. *picquet.* A fashionable card game.

THE MAN OF MODE

P. 131. *Now for some ages.* The opening couplet of Waller's poem, *Upon a War with Spain,* etc. One reason for identifying Dorimant with Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, is that the nobleman had the habit of constantly quoting Waller's verses. Such citations are frequent in *The Man of Mode.*

Foggy. Puffy or unhealthily fat.

It is not, etc. The opening lines of *The Self-Banished,* by Waller.

P. 132. *Totnam.* The resort of the bourgeois.

An Angel. A golden coin of the value of half-a-sovereign, familiar to all readers of the *Merchant of Venice.*

Newington is among the orchards of Kent.

Fruz. A friz of curled hair.

The Change. The trading center of London.

Resty. Restive.

P. 133. *God a-mercy.* Brett-Smith cites many examples to sustain the interpretation, "thank you!"

Gentlemen of the long robe. Lawyers.

Bog. Impertinence.

Pis-aller. Last resort.

Vizard. A masked woman. See Vanbrugh.

The mother. The disease, *hysterica passio* (*King Lear,* II, iv, 56).

Tenders. Esteems.

P. 135. *Artificially.* Artfully.

Uncase. Strip, flay.

Ingross. Amass.

Ale and history. The proverb has not been traced.

Motions. Actions.

Several. Separate.

Bloody. From *By our Lady!* Then as now unfitted to a gentleman's mouth.

Tope. The verb of toper.

P. 135. *Bethlem. Bethlehem* Hospital for the insane, the original of "bedlam."

Judgments. Assignments of property.

P. 136. *At Long's or Locket's.* Famous taverns of the day. Etherege frequented Locket's and Vanbrugh sends his Lord Foppington thither.

Spark it. Play the woman of fashion.

P. 137. *Our love is as frail,* etc. This is the motive of Etherege's little poem:

> "It is not, Celia, in our power
> To say how long our love will last."

Pize. Pest or pox.

P. 138. *Ombre.* A popular card game.

Carder. Gamester.

Gleeker. Card-player.

Tower. Lofty headdress.

Black ace. The spadille, the ace of spades in ombre and quadrille.

Our Operas. Brett-Smith quotes Evelyn (Jan. 5, 1673): "I saw an Italian opera in music, the first that had been in England of this kind."

Flute doux. Probably the old *flute d'amour.*

Hautboys. The *haut bois* or oboe.

The Diversions of Brussels. This, like *The Art of Affectation,* is probably an invention for the nonce.

Suddenly. Shortly.

P. 140. *So thunder breaks,* etc. One of Dorimant's many quotations from Waller—in this case, the opening couplet of Waller's *Of her Chamber.*

I' the Mall. The gravel walk in St. James's Park.

P. 142. *The Haughty Merab.* See I Samuel XIV, 49, XVIII, 17-19. Harriet is quoting from Cowley's treatment of the theme in his *Davideis* III, 625-6.

P. 143. *Bart'lomew.* Bartholomew Fair held every year (see Ben Jonson's play).

To play booty. To play a game unfairly.

The Circle. The Ring in Hyde Park.

P. 144. *Muddiman.* Henry Muddiman (1629-92) received large fees for his news-letters to all parts of England.

Tender. Cherish or regard.

P. 145. *Ordinaries.* Taverns.

Embarras. An overgreat number.

Belles assemblées. Gatherings of fashion.

P. 146. *Brilliant.* Brilliance.

Equipage. Train of servants.

Calèche. A light low-wheel-carriage.

Grossier. Boorish.

Barroy, et al. A number of fashionable Parisian merchants.

Orangerie. Gloves with orange scent were fashionable.

A rest. A remnant.

P. 147. *Stums a brain.* Ferments giving a false impression of vivacity.

In a fine taking. In great excitement.

"*In love the victors,* etc." Another Dorimant quotation from Waller.

Tweers. Twines, leers.

P. 148. *High Mall.* The Mall at its very best.

Snatched from myself, etc. Yet another quotation by Dorimant from Waller's *Of Loving at First Sight.*

P. 149. *See how beauty passes.* The opening lines of Suckling's Sonnet I.

Hulched up. Hunchbacked.

Pulvilio. Perfumed powder.

Convenient. Mistress.

Oily buttock. Loose woman.

Spruce prig. Coxcomb.

Caravan. Easy victim.

Smoke. Understand.

P. 150. *Insulting.* Exulting.

Dainty pair of boxes. Some kind of overshoes.

Trig. Trot.

Gray's Inn. One of the Inns of Court.

P. 151. *Wild, witty, winsome,* etc. Parodied from Waller's poem, *Of the Danger his Majesty escaped,* etc. (Brett-Smith.)

Kindly. Naturally.

P. 152. *Gorget.* A woman's wimple.

Rebate. Dull.

P. 153. *Couchée.* The King's bed-time reception.

Ezvilic. For *eveillée.* Addison's *Spectator,* 45, urges women to keep their sprightliness from degenerating into levity and warns them against the "more awakened" discourse and behavior of the French. (Verity.)

Prudè. Coquetté. Mark the bad French of Sir Fopling.

Cog à l'âne. Stuff and nonsense.

La Corneus and Sallyes. Intended for Mesdames Corneul and Selles, "minor figures in the French literary world." (Brett-Smith.)

Bussy. . . . Räbutin. Count Bussy-Rabutin (1618-1693), the author of the famous *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules* not to be confounded with *Bussy d'Amboise,* the hero of Chapman's tragedies.

State. Canopy.

P. 154. *St. André.* A famous French dancer associated with the masques of the period.

Basqué. For *basque,* the skirt of a coat.

P. 155. After *quickly,* Young Bellair, Lady Woodwil, Harriet and Dorimant *exeunt.*

P. 156. *Sleeveless.* Fruitless.

P. 157. *Merille.* Bussy, whom Etherege had evidently been reading (*supra*) tells us that Merille was the chief confidant of the Duke of Candale, Captain-general of the French army, and was afterwards the *valet-de-chambre* of the Duke of Orleans.

The Duke of Candale's immortal reputation. Bussy describes at length his appearance and *grande qualité.*

Brandenburg. Dressing gown (from the Prussian city).

Lambert. Michel Lambert (1610-1696) was music-master of the King's chamber.

Ruelle. The bedroom or alcove of ladies of fashion, who held morning receptions there. (*N. E. D.*)

Baptiste. Jean Baptiste Lully (1633-1687) "the founder of French opera" and called by Pepys "the present great composer."

P. 160. *Rook.* Cheat.

Properties. Models of conduct.

P. 162. Song by Sir C. S. "The prologue was written by Sir Car Scroope, as also the song in the last act translated from part of an elegy written in French by Mme. la Comtesse de la Suze" (Thomas Coxeter), cited by Brett-Smith.

Music so softens. Dorimant cites Waller's poem, *On my Lady Isabella playing on the lute.*

P. 163. *Hangings.* Tapestries.

High Park. Hyde Park.

The Canonical hour. Hour within which marriages can be legally performed.

P. 164. *Hoisting.* Romping.

P. 166. *Belle passion.* Love affair.

Volery. Aviary.

Dill and cucumbers. Verity cites Addison's paper on the "Cries of London," *Spectator,* No. 251. "I am always pleased with that particular time of the year which is proper for the picking of dill and cucumbers; but alas this cry, like the song of the nightingales, is not heard above two months."

Arrant. Thorough.

Cocks. Swaggers, struts, or cocks his hat.

Toss. Of the head.

Wallow. Rolling walk.

Snake. Curl or tail of his wig.

Shog. Jerk.

VENICE PRESERVED

P. 171. *Venice Preserved* has yet another prologue, written by Dryden, and another epilogue by Otway, both "spoken upon his Royal Highness the Duke of York's coming to the Theatre, Friday, April 21, 1682." These are printed in the Appendix to the "Temple" and to the "Belles Lettres" editions of the play.

witnesses. Titus Oates and other informers against the accused in the "Popish Plot."

P. 172. *Here is a traitor too that's very old.* Though the application has been overlooked by all editors, this is an obvious reference to William Howard, Viscount Stafford, who, accused of participation in the "Popish Plot," was tried by his peers in December, 1680, found guilty and executed. The sentence "to be hanged and quartered" was remitted by the King in spite of much vindictive opposition to this clemency.

Mother Creswold's. Mother Creswell, a white-slaver of the time—like the Chaffinches in "Peveril of the Peak."

Oh Poland, Poland, etc. An obvious reference to the designs of the Earl of Shaftesbury upon the crown of Poland.

P. 173. *practised.* Plotted. Priuli's speech recalls Brabantio's words to Othello (I, ii, 62), "O thou foul thief, where hast thou stowed my daughter?"

The Adriatic wedded, etc. Otway had found in his source this reference to the Venetian ceremony of Ascension Day:—"Jaffier had the curiosity to witness the ceremony of the Doge espousing the sea." "We wed thee, O Sea, as token of a true and lasting dominion" was the formula, accompanied by the casting of a gold ring into the depths. See below.

still. Constantly, always,—as in Shakspere.

P. 174. *weeds.* Garments, dress, as in "widow's weeds."

P. 175. *that filthy cuckoo.* The cuckoo's habit of depositing its eggs in the nest of some other bird, which is ultimately destroyed by its nestling, has been the theme of writers from Aristotle to Chaucer and Shakspere. See *The Way of the World,* Prologue, 8-9.

Hirco. From Latin, *hircus,* a goat.

privilege. Doubtless the special right or immunity of Antonio as a senator (i.e., of Anthony Ashley Cooper as a peer).

public good. Commonwealth. See three lines below, *common good.*

massy. Massive.

P. 177. *suage.* Assuage, soothe.

P. 178. *out-act.* Excel, outdo.

hearse. Coffin, bier.

The Ephesian matron. This story of the widow who mutilates her dead husband for the love of a knight is "perhaps the most popular of all stories" (Joseph Jacobs). Upon its earliest version, that of Petronius, Chapman founded his *Widow's Tears.* It was well known to the Middle Ages in a variant appearing in *The Seven Sages of Rome.*

keep up. Shut up.

fisk. Frisk, scamper about.

mumping. Grimacing, chattering.

P. 179. *aches.* A dissyllable, as in Shakspere.

green-sickness girls. Young girls morbid with love.

P. 180. *dull.* Slow in action.

sea-coal. Usually explained as "coal brought to London by sea." "Possibly in early times, the chief source of coal supply may have been the beds

exposed by marine denudation on the coasts of Northumberland and South Wales" (*N. E. D.*).

P. 183. *rump.* Romp, frolic.

P. 184. *sixty-one years.* Antonio's age, as well as his name, is made to conform to that of the Earl of Shaftesbury.

P. 185. *censurest.* Judgest.

P. 186. *Cato's daughter.* The story of "Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia" (*Merchant of Venice,* I, i, 166), was as popular among the Elizabethans (cf. *Julius Cæsar*) as that of Lucrece and Tarquin (cited earlier in this scene).

bone. Boon, boon companion.

P. 188. *foil.* Track of a hunted animal.

caudles. Warm drinks sweetened and spiced.

watering at. Longing for, lusting after.

towzed. Tousle, pull about, handle roughly.

monster. Beast with horns, cuckold.

mortifying. Practising self-denial, ascetic. A common Shaksperean use of the word.

P. 189. *battalia.* Body of men in battle array.

P. 198. *gall.* Early quartos read, call.

P. 200. *Hey then, up go we.* The refrain of many songs of the period.

P. 204. *baited.* Worried, tormented.

P. 205. *smuggle.* Snuggle, fondle.

P. 206. *Rose Alley cudgel-ambuscade.* A reference to the cowardly attack upon Dryden, at the end of 1679, by the hired ruffians of the Earl of Rochester, who was also Otway's enemy.

picture-mangler at Guild-hall. The rascal that cut the Duke of York's picture.

LOVE'S LAST SHIFT

Prologue.

P. 213. *Our young one.* Cibber was twenty-four when *Love's Last Shift* was first acted in January, 1696.

Van Dych. Van Dyck (1599-1641). The great Flemish artist had painted Charles I and many English nobles during his long stay in England.

P. 215. *Jack.* The small bowl used as a mark in a game of bowls.

P. 216. *The fiddles.* The usual serenade on the night after marriage.

P. 217. *Heaven intended for a man.* Compare Portia's famous comment (*Merchant of Venice,* I, ii): "God made him and therefore let him pass for a man."

The fool that fired Diana's temple in 356 B.C. was Herostratus.

P. 220. *Prince Arthur.* Sir Richard Blackmore's epic, *Prince Arthur* (1695), anticipated in its preface Jeremy Collier's attack upon immoral and indecent plays, and thus provoked talk in the coffee houses.

Hopes! Oh insolence! The three sentences that followed this in the first edition were omitted in the later texts out of deference to the better taste of the new time.

Celia. The poets of the day often gave this name to their ladies. The best known "Celia" song is that of Sir George Etherege.

P. 221. *The late mourning.* For Queen Mary, who had died in 1694, the year before the making of the play.

P. 222. *Bien entendu.* Sir Novelty, in his ignorance of French which belongs to the Fopling tradition (see Etherege), thinks this means "well made."

Dutch corporal. Many Dutch soldiers came to England with William III.

P. 223. *Legerdemain.* Sleight of hand performer.

P. 224. *Clipping . . . goldsmiths.* The clipping of gold coins, a common abuse that led to the appointment of Sir Isaac Newton as warden of the mint.

Cravat string, etc. Articles of apparel. The centurine was a waist belt, the burdash was a fringed sash or cravat and the steenkirk, a flowing cravat, used later by Cibber as a stock-property in *The Careless Husband* and mentioned by Vanbrugh in *The Relapse.*

The conveniency of two play houses. In 1695, the year before *Love's Last Shift* was put on at Drury Lane, a second theatre was erected for Betterton and his company within the walls of the tennis court in Lincoln Inn Fields (Cibber, *Apology,* ch. VI).

P. 225. *The Bank of England.* The establishment of the Bank of England in 1694 had been "a great hindrance" to "city goldsmiths" who had conducted private banking houses.

Jesuit's powder. Quinine, well known to the Indians, was brought from South America by the Jesuits.

P. 227. *Mechanical.* Vulgar.

In ordine ad. Perhaps for *in ordinem adducere,* to reduce to order, to settle everything.

He Would if He Could. The reference is to *She Would if She Could* (1668) discussed in the introduction to Etherege.

The offspring of more than one man's labor. This phrase may well be applied to each representative of the Fopling traditions.

P. 228. *Rosamond's Pond.* In St. James's Park.

P. 229. *Dei gratia.* "By the grace of God," following the name of the sovereign on English coins.

Diana. The Moon's love for Endymion was the theme of much Elizabethan poetry and later stirred the imagination of Keats.

Daylight about his ears. Apollo was the sun-god.

Hautboys. Players on the oboe, a wooden wind instrument.

P. 230. *Government or religion.* A reference to the Protestant Succession with William and Mary in 1688.

Medley of human stuffs. This gossip about one's neighbors anticipates the prattle of the inner circle in *The School for Scandal.*

A known woman at the Restoration. The description of Mrs. Holdoret recalls Thackeray's phrase in Henry Esmond "one of Charles II's ladies."

An eternal fantcarer. Such a person is Dorimant in *The Man of Mode* who makes Mrs. Loveit tear her fan in her ragings (II, ii).

A Dutch officer. One of the many who came to England with William III.

Beau Noisy. The "Beau" was coming into his own, "to give his little senate laws" until the days of Beau Brummel.

A by-blow. A bastard.

The Gridiron. An inn.

P. 231. *Pointhead cloths.* The lady in point-lace headdress.

Pure and. Entirely.

Shoot the lock. With a pistol bullet through the keyhole.

Chopped. Snapped.

P. 234. *Furies and hell.* The ravings of Mrs. Flareit recall those of Mrs. Loveit in *The Man of Mode.*

P. 239. *The compass of a horn-book.* The single sheet of a horn-book is contrasted with voluminous legal documents.

P. 240. Act V. Sc. ii. The speeches of Amanda in this scene anticipate the sentimental utterances of many eighteenth-century heroines.

The next tavern-bush. Sign of a public house. "Good wine needs no bush."

P. 242. *The red.* Wine. Compare Dick Swiveller, "the rosy," in Dickens' *Old Curiosity Shop.*

P. 245. *Groom porter.* An officer of the King's Household who controlled the gambling rooms of the palace.

A poet upon the fourth day. After he had received the third night profits of a play.

THE RELAPSE

P. 252. Miss Cross, the young girl who spoke the epilogue of *Love's Last Shift* and the first prologue of *The Relapse* was "frighted away" from the stage, Farquhar tells us, by Collier's diatribe, but returned in February, 1705, to dance and sing in Cibber's play, *The Careless Husband,* at Drury Lane.

In six weeks space. The script of *The Relapse* was in the hands of the managers of Drury Lane in April, 1696, three months after the appearance of *Love's Last Shift.*

P. 254. *Beaux on stage.* An annoyance to both audience and actors, which Queen Anne tried vainly to check.

A comb. Used by fops to comb their wigs. Dobrée cites Prologue to *Conquest of Granada, II.*

P. 257. *Half a piece.* A piece was a coin worth twenty shillings.

Drab Alley. Seemingly an invention of Vanbrugh's.

Wapping. About two miles below London Bridge. Here ferry and tunnel cross to Rotherhithe. The resort of sailors and hence of the half-world.

Powder puff. Like the comb an article essential to foppish wearers of wigs.

Oaths. No Jacobite would swear allegiance to William and Mary.

Army. A scanty maintenance. Captain Vanbrugh knew whereof he spoke.

P. 258. *C'est quelque chose,* etc. "That's something fine, or may the devil carry me off." Through his long stay in France, Vanbrugh was at home in the language and quotes it often in his plays.

Steenkirk. A flowing cravat fashionable since the French horsemen rode into the battle of Steenkirk (August 3, 1692) with fluttering neckwear. It appears in *Love's Last Shift,* II, i, and is an important stage-property in Cibber's *Careless Husband.* See many references in *D. N. B.*

My thinks. Me thinks.

P. 259. *Lacket's.* In *The Man of Mode,* I, i, the beaux hesitate between the two fashionable taverns, Long's or Lacket's. Adam Lacket's "ordinary" was continually referred to in plays and poems from 1675 to 1725. Foppington seems much at home there (II, i).

P. 260. *Burned in the hand.* The punishment of petty offenders.

Hephestion. The beloved friend of Alexander.

P. 261. *Souse.* An old form of sou.

The plays . . . have some small charms. A stock joke of comedy. Dobrée quotes Wycherley's *Plain Dealer* (1676), II, i: "Then you would have a woman of honor . . . undergo all the hideous obscenity she hears at nasty plays."

P. 262. *There is a modesty,* etc. Vanbrugh wrote good verse, only when unaware. His prose here is verse, as elsewhere his verse is often prose.

P. 263. *Lordship . . . coxcomb.* In the case of Foppington the two are identical.

P. 264. *Till I go to the play.* About five o'clock or later.

P. 265. *Bubble.* "Cheat" as in South Sea Bubble.

P. 268. *Masks.* Masked women. One is reminded of "Dorimant at the play entertaining a mask" in *The Man of Mode,* II, i. The custom of wearing visards later fell into disrepute and was forbidden by law. Dobrée cites Cib-

ber's *Apology*, Ch. VIII: "I remember the ladies were then afraid of venturing barefaced to a new comedy."

P. 269. *A padnag.* "An ambling nag; an easy-going pad-horse." (*N. E. D.*)

Better husband. "You should have husbanded better your resources." Emerson uses the noun in the archaic sense.

P. 270. *Checked with the least corruption.* The lines from here to end of speech are printed as verse by Leigh Hunt.

P. 272. *Your lure.* A hawking term common in literature if not in the common language of the day. "A lure was a dead pigeon or artificial bird used for calling home long-winged hawks, especially when young." (Dobrée.)

P. 273. *Pickeering.* "To skirmish playfully or amorously." (*N. E. D.*) Dobrée queries: "Is it from picaro?"

P. 275. *The King of Assyria.* "He was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen." (Daniel IV, 33.) This was said of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.

P. 277. *Bring his gown to a cassock.* "Tear his clothes off him." (Dobrée.) As the cassock was underneath the gown, to tear his gown off him, leaving the cassock which was underneath exposed.

P. 279. *Plotting Sisters.* "A Fond Husband or the Plotting Sisters," by Thomas D'Urfey, 1677.

Clear. Drunk.

P. 281. *Jernie die.* Corruption of *Je renie Dieu.* (*N. E. D.*)

Chartré. Mis en chartre, "put in jail."

Williamite or a Jacobite. William had replaced James eight years before *The Relapse* appeared, but supporters of the old régime were numerous.

P. 286. *Still something or other,* etc. "Fate claps something or other in the way."

P. 288. *Skip-jacket varlet.* "A groom employed to ride horses up and down to show their paces."

P. 289. Act V, Sc. iv, from *Enter Worthy to end.* Printed as verse in most modern editions but as prose in early ones.

P. 290. *Home reflections.* Direct reflections.

P. 291. *Practice of Piety.* A religious manual current in many editions (1660, 1684, 1709).

P. 294. *The war.* The War against France ended by the Peace of Ryswick signed some nine months after the acting of this play.

Dance the Tyburn jig. When one is swinging at a rope's end on the scaffold.

Bawdry snuff-box. Box with an amorous picture on the lid.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

P. 300. *Audire est . . .* It is worth your while, ye that do not wish well to adulterers, to hear how they are hampered on all sides.

metuat. . . . The woman fears for her dowry, if she should be caught.

In her own nest. . . . The cuckoo lays her eggs in the nest of another bird, which hatches them out. Cf. *Venice Preserved,* I, i, p. 175.

buttered still. . . . Always flattered lavishly.

P. 302. *vapors.* Depression, hypochondria.

one man of the community. Made up of Witwoud and Petulant.

ratafia. A cordial or liqueur flavored with certain fruits or their kernels, usually almonds or peach-, apricot-, and cherry-kernels. (*N. E. D.*)

continued in the state of nature. Proceeded naturally.

the last canonical hour. The canonical hours were certain times of the day appointed by the canons for prayer and devotion. (*N. E. D.*)

tedious. Slow.

Pancras. The Church of St. Pancras in the Fields.

Duke's-place. St. James's Church, Duke's Place, Aldgate, where Fleet marriages were performed.

P. 303. *Dame Partlet.* The proper name of a hen, so used in Chaucer's *Nonne Preestes Tale.*

Rosamond's Pond. Situated in the southwest corner of St. James's Park and famous as a lovers' meeting-place.

the monster in The Tempest. Caliban.

P. 304. *commonplace of comparisons.* A commonplace book or collection of comparisons for use in conversation.

P. 305. *cinnamon-water.* A drink composed of sugar, water, and spirit flavored with cinnamon. (Archer.)

Roxolanas. Roxolana is the queen of Solyman the Magnificent in D'Avenant's *Siege of Rhodes.*

P. 306. *pearl of orient.* A pearl from the Indian seas of greater beauty than that found in European waters.

a quaker hates a parrot. Because the parrot is so talkative. (Archer.)

a fishmonger hates a hard frost. Because the cold makes his work very unpleasant.

the Mall. Once part of St. James's Park, now Pall Mall.

P. 307. *Penthesilea.* Queen of the Amazons.

P. 309. *you have a mask.* Masks were as generally worn at this time as veils are to-day.

Mosca in The Fox . . . Mosca in Jonson's *Volpone* made what terms he pleased with his dupes by declaring each of them to be the sole heir of Volpone, who was falsely represented as on the point of death.

P. 310. *with her fan spread.* A play on fan, meaning wing, sail.

tift and tift. To tiff is to dress, deck out, trick out (one's person, hair, etc.).

crips. Crisp, curly.

P. 312. *Mopus.* A dull, stupid person.

Spanish paper. A cosmetic.

bit of nutmeg in your pocket. Cf. Swift, *Polite Conversation,* 97: "If you carry a nutmeg in your pocket, you'll certainly be marry'd to an old man." (Quoted in *N. E. D.*)

P. 313. *Maritornes.* A chambermaid with whom Don Quixote is in love.

Quarles and Prynne. Francis Quarles (1592-1644), a sacred poet, whose most famous work is *Divine Emblems.* William Prynne (1600-1669), a Puritan lawyer, whose *Histriomastix,* a huge work of eleven hundred pages, was a violent attack upon the stage.

The Short View of the Stage. Jeremy Collier (1650-1726) in 1698 severely arraigned the stage in his *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage.*

Robin from Locket's. A drawer or waiter from Locket's Ordinary, a well-known tavern.

Long-lane. From West Smithfield to Barbican; it was given over to the sale of second-hand clothes.

P. 314. *the million lottery.* A lottery with a million pounds in prizes.

the whole court upon a birthday. Because of the presents given a royal personage upon his birthday.

Ludgate. A prison for debtors of the better class. It was in the precinct of Blackfriars.

has a month's mind. Has an inclination or liking, in this case to Mirabell.

passe-partout. A master-key.

P. 315. *the day of projection.* Projection in alchemy was the casting of the powder of philosopher's stone upon a metal in fusion to effect its transmutation into gold or silver. (*N. E. D.*)

drap de Berri. A kind of woollen cloth coming from Berry in France. (*N. E. D.*)

Rhenish wine tea. Taken to reduce flesh. (Archer.)

burnishes. Increases in breadth.

P. 316. *the ordinary's paid for setting the psalm.* The ordinary was the chaplain of Newgate prison, whose duty it was to prepare condemned prisoners for death. (*N. E. D.*) See *The Beggar's Opera,* p. 493.

P. 317. *Bartlemew and his fair.* In August every year from 1133 to 1855 a fair was held at West Smithfield at which all kinds of wares were sold and shows exhibited. See Ben Jonson's account of this in his *Bartholomew Fair.*

smoke. Make fun of.

by the Wrekin. A solitary hill near Shrewsbury. Cf. Farquhar's address "To all friends round the Wrekin" prefixed to his *Recruiting Officer.*

flap-dragon. From signifying a play in which a raisin burning in brandy is caught in the mouth and then eaten, the word comes to mean a raisin thus caught and eaten, till at last it denotes anything worthless, as here.

a hare's scut. A hare's short, erect tail, hence anything worthless.

P. 318. *Salop.* Shropshire, of which the county seat is Shrewsbury.

a call of sergeants. When a sergeant-at-law or lawyer was called to the bar.

out of your time. While you were still indentured to an attorney. (Archer.)

Furnival's Inn. In Holborn, one of the inns of Chancery, attached to Lincoln's Inn.

Dawks's Letter. The *news-letter* founded by Ichabod Dawks in 1696.

Weekly Bill. The Weekly Bills of Mortality for London, issued from 1538 until 1837, are mentioned by Farquhar, *The Beaux' Stratagem,* II, i (this edition, p. 345.

to choose. By choice, in preference.

P. 319. *deputy-lieutenant's hall.* Because decorated with antlers.

cap of maintenance. A kind of cap, with two points like horns behind, borne in the arms of certain families . . . is described by heralds as a "cap of maintenance." (*N. E. D.*) The word "maintenance" is to be taken in its usual meaning, since Mrs. Marwood says that his horns (the sign of the cuckold) may maintain him if he can edure ("away with") his wife.

set his hand in. Enter him in the game.

P. 320. *pulvilled.* Perfumed with powder.

"There never yet. . . ." From "Poems on Several Occasions," p. 20, ed. 1719, of Suckling's *Works.* Sir John Suckling (1609-1642) was a lyric and dramatic poet.

"Thyrsis, a youth. . . ." From Waller's *The Story of Phœbus and Daphne Applied.* Edmund Waller (1606-1687) was a lyric poet.

"I prithee spare me. . . . . " These and the following verses are also from Suckling's "Poems on Several Occasions," p. 24.

P. 321. *all a case.* All one.

"Like Phœbus sung . . ." From Waller's poem mentioned above.

instant. Urgent.

douceurs, ye sommeils du matin. Sweetnesses, ye morning naps. (Archer.)

P. 322. *Barbadoes waters.* A cordial flavored with orange- and lemon-peel. (*N. E. D.*)

clary. A sweet liquor consisting of a mixture of wine, clarified honey, and various spices, as pepper and ginger. (*N. E. D.*)

P. 323. *unsized camlet.* A kind of stuff originally made of silk and camel's

hair. (Johnson.) Hence very soft and delicate stuff. "Unsized" means without size or stiffening.

noli prosequi. Notice of unwillingness to prosecute.

Lacedemonian. One who speaks with laconic brevity.

Baldwin. The name of the ass in the mediæval story of *Reynard the Fox.*

Gemini. The twin stars, Castor and Pollux; hence loosely used for a pair.

Borachio. The Spanish word *borachio* means a leather wine bottle; hence it is applied to a drunkard. Cf. Borachio in Shakspere's *Much Ado.*

P. 324. *a good pimple.* A boon companion.

Salopian. An inhabitant of Salop or Shropshire.

thou shalt be my Tantony. . . . The hog is one of the symbols of St. Anthony. "The monks of the Order of St. Anthony kept herds of consecrated pigs, which were allowed to feed at the public charge, and which it was a profanation to steal or kill; hence the proverb about the fatness of a 'Tantony pig.'" (Mrs. Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art,* ii, 733.)

P. 325. *save-all.* A pan with spike for burning up candle-ends.

P. 326. *bulk.* A framework projecting from the front of a shop; a stall. (*N. E. D.*)

Frisoncer gorget. A kerchief made of woollen stuff and worn by women over their bosoms.

colbertine. A kind of open lace with a square ground.

put upon his clergy. Forced to plead benefit of clergy, thereby escaping punishment at the hands of the law.

Abigails and Andrews. Ladies' maids and gentlemen's valets.

Philander. Lover.

P. 327. *Duke's-place.* See above, I, i.

Bridewell-bride. Bridewell was a house of correction for prisoners. Cf. *Tom Thumb,* p. 518.

P. 328. *O yes.* The Old French *Oyez,* hear ye. A call by a court officer to command silence; hence here as an introduction to a scandalous case to be tried at court.

quoif. A white cap formerly worn by lawyers as a distinctive mark of their profession. (*N. E. D.*)

cantharides. Used internally as a stimulant to the genito-urinary organs. (*N. E. D.*)

cow-itch. Cowage, the hairs of the pod of a tropical plant, which cause intolerable itching.

P. 329. *Czarish Majesty's retinue.* Peter the First paid a visit to England in 1697, three years before the production of this play.

P. 330. *Pylades and Orestes.* Orestes, who was offered life by the priestess Iphigeneia provided he carry a message to Greece, persuades Pylades to take his place while he undergoes death. The discovery that Iphigeneia is his sister saves his life.

quorum. Certain justices of the peace, usually of eminent learning and ability, whose presence was necessary to constitute a bench. (*N. E. D.*)

an old fox. A sword.

mittimus. A command in writing to a jailer to keep the person in custody in close confinement; here the vellum upon which such an order might be written. (Archer.)

P. 331. *Messalina's poems.* Messalina was the shameless wife of Tiberius Claudius (10 B.C.-54 A.D.), emperor of Rome.

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

P. 339. *the Plain-Dealer.* A reference to Wycherley, under the name of his last and perhaps greatest comedy, which appeared in the year of Farquhar's birth (1677).

P. 340. *Union.* The Treaty of Union between England and Scotland received the assent of Queen Anne, March 6, 1707, two days before the production of our comedy.

P. 341. *the Lion and the Rose.* The names of inn-rooms. Cf. *She Stoops to Conquer,* III, i, p. 588.

usquebaugh. Irish "water of life" or whisky (cf. French "eau de vie").

tympanies. Dropsical swelling of the abdomen.

fits of the mother. Hysterics.

the king's evil. Scrofula.

chincough. Whooping-cough.

P. 342. *whisk.* The old form of whist.

curious. Eccentric.

P. 343. *counterscarp.* In fortification the slope of a ditch opposite the parapet.

Actæon. A hunter changed to a stag by Diana, whom he sees bathing, and torn to pieces by his own dogs.

out of doors. Out of fashion.

P. 344. *our gang.* Macaulay, in the famous third chapter of his *History,* cites "a proclamation warning the innkeepers that the eye of the government was upon them. Their criminal connivance, it was affirmed, enabled banditti to infest the roads with impunity. That these suspicions were not without foundation is proved by the dying speeches of some penitent robbers of that age, who appear to have received from the innkeepers services much resembling those which Farquhar's Boniface rendered to Gibbet." See, too, Austin Dobson's "Ballad of Beau Brocade."

P. 345. *In St. Martin's Parish.* In this parish, Farquhar wrote our play, and here, a month or two later, he died and was buried.

Doctors' Commons. "The Association or College of Doctors of Civil Law dined in commons: hence the name, which was applied also to the civil and ecclesiastical courts which convened in the buildings of the Association. These courts had jurisdiction in matters of marriage and divorce." (Strauss.)

within the weekly bills. The district covered by the London Bills of Mortality, kept from 1538 to 1837,—hence the city, as distinguished from the country. Cf. *The Way of the World,* III, i (p. 318).

P. 346. *tea.* Tea, introduced into England at the Restoration, was drunk in mid-morning at this period.

naught. Wicked. Like "naughty" in Shakspere.

P. 347. *the coronation.* The coronation of Queen Anne, nearly five years before, April 23, 1702.

ceruse. A white-lead cosmetic.

P. 348. *premises.* The articles just mentioned.

gentlemen o' the pad. Gentlemen of the road (path), or highwaymen.

smoke. Discover.

Old Brentford at Christmas. As Strauss notes, "Brentford, eight miles west of London, divided by the River Brent into the Old and New towns, has frequent mention in literature from Shakspere (*Merry Wives*) to Thackeray (*Miscellanies*)."

catechise. This catechism was published separately under the title, "Love's Catechism compiled by the Author of the Recruiting Officer for the use and

benefit of all young bachelors, maids and widows that are inclinable to change their condition" (1707). Other "single sheets" of like character were popular at this time.

P. 349. *habit.* Dress.

cephalic plaster. Plaster for headache.

P. 350. *Oroondates.* The hero of *Cassandra,* La Calprenède's heroical romance. *Cesario.* The assumed name of Viola in *Twelfth Night. Amadis.* The hero of the great Spanish romance of chivalry, *Amadis of Gaul,* so popular at the time of the Renaissance.

P. 351. *quoif clear-starched.* "A close-fitting cap, stiffened with colorless starch." (Temple.)

Toftida. Mrs. Katherine Tofts, a famous opera singer of the day, who had sung in *The Recruiting Officer.*

Will's coffee-house and *White's.* Macaulay quotes (*History of England,* chap. iii) this reference to the two famous coffee-houses (both of which are mentioned by Steele in the first number of *The Tatler* as the addresses of his papers) and comments: "The highwayman held an aristocratical position in the community of thieves, appeared at fashionable coffee-houses and betted with men of quality on the race-ground." The "Sons of Will's" (Epilogue) are poets and men of letters. (See Archer's song in III, iii.)

P. 352. *Teague.* A traditional nickname for Irishmen, both on and off the stage—used as the name of the Irish character in Farquhar's *The Twin Rivals,* and applied in a satire of the day to the dramatist himself. The Mermaid edition cites a letter on "Teague" and his "brogue" by Mr. Albert Matthews in the *Nation* (New York), July 21, 1904.

what King of Spain. This was the time of the War of the Spanish Succession.

P. 353. *Pressing Act. The Recruiting Officer* furnishes an admirable commentary upon the Impressment Acts occasioned during Anne's reign by the War of the Spanish Succession. "Such able-bodied men as have not any lawful calling or employment or visible means for their maintenance and livelihood" were liable to be enlisted.

P. 354. *Sir Simon the King.* A popular air deriving its name from Simon Wadloe, the host of the Devil's Tavern in Ben Jonson's days. This tune was the favorite of Fielding's Squire Western.

P. 355. *prevent.* Anticipate.

P. 356. *Enter Count Bellair.* The editions of 1736 and 1760 have this note: "This scene, with the entire part of the Count, was cut out by the Author after the first night's representation, and where he should enter in the last scene of Act V, it is added to the part of Foigard."

P. 360. *Cedunt arma togae.* "Arms yield to the toga"—i.e., the gown takes precedence over the sword. Incongruous on the lips of Scrub.

Alexander's battles. Le Brun's famous paintings of the battles of Alexander the Great for the Gobelins tapestries of Louis XIV.

a greater general. Archer compares with the triumphs of Alexander the recent victories of Marlborough.

P. 363. *Tom's.* The coffee-house of Thomas Eaton, near Will's in the Covent Garden neighborhood.

Morris. Yet another coffee-house, mentioned frequently by Farquhar.

club o' th' reckoning. Each one's share of the total amount of the bill.

Steal two acts of a play. An allusion to the contemporary custom of permitting the playgoer to see one act of a play for nothing.

Tipperary and *Kilkenny.* Famous grammar schools. The second counted among its pupils Swift and Congreve.

P. 364. This picturesque scene between innkeeper and highwaymen was omitted from early stage versions at the advice of Steele.

a Vigo business. The great victory of Vigo, won by the English and Dutch over the fleets of France and Spain (October 12, 1702), made such an impression upon Farquhar that he described it at length in his epic, *Barcelona*, and mentioned it often in his plays. "Abundance of plate and other valuables fell into the hands of the conquerors."

Tyburn. The famous London place of execution, which was situated near the site of the Marble Arch.

P. 365. *all-fours.* A card-game, "High, low, Jack and the game."

P. 366. *Alcmena.* The mother of Hercules by Jupiter, who took the form of her husband, Amphitryon.

P. 369. *Swiss.* An allusion to the Swiss mercenaries,—celebrated a century later for their defence of Louis XVI, and memorialized in the famous "Lion of Lucerne."

the Eddystone. The first lighthouse, completed in 1699, was destroyed by the terrible storm of November 27, 1703.

P. 371. *Garzoon.* The Frenchman's form of the oath, "Gadzoons!" (corrupted from "God's wounds!"), perhaps under the influence of "garçon."

Charles, Viscount Aimwell. Farquhar is certainly nodding here, as Aimwell is elsewhere called "Tom" (II, ii; V, iv).

ombre. See Pope's detailed description of this very old card-game in *The Rape of the Lock*, Canto III.

P. 372. *Leuctra.* "Epaminondas saved his Thebes and died" (Byron) in this great victory over the forces of Sparta, 371 B.C.

Sergeant Kite. A prominent character in *The Recruiting Officer.*

CATO

P. 378. *While Cato gives his little senate laws.* Later Pope turned this line against Addison ("Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," 209-210):

"Like Cato, give his little senate laws
And sit attentive to his own applause."

P. 379. *Attend.* Altered from "arise" in deference to Addison's fear that this would be misconstrued.

The dawn is overcast, etc. Hurd notes that "the opening of the drama is too solemn and declamatory; the author speaks, not his *persona dramatis.*"

Pharsalia. In the region around the city of Pharsalus in Thessaly, Cæsar won a decisive victory over the army of Pompey. (See II, i, p. 386.)

P. 380. *Utica.* This city, the scene of our play, was an important sea-coast town of Africa, northwest of Carthage. From it Cato derived his name of "Uticensis," as it was the stronghold of the republican party, of which he was now leader.

Numidian prince. Juba I, the father of the young hero, espoused the cause of Pompey in his contest with Cæsar, and was forced by the conqueror to forfeit his African kingdom, which became a Roman province.

P. 382. *the embattled elephant.* In their first battle with Pyrrhus, the Romans fled terrified before the elephants of the enemy.

Zama. A town of Numidia, celebrated for Scipio's victory over Hannibal (202 B.C.). It was destroyed by the Romans after the death of Juba I.

P. 383. *He's still severely bent against himself.* Plutarch tells us of Cato: "He employed himself in inuring his body to labor and violent exercise and habituated himself to go bareheaded in the hottest and coldest weather, and to

go on foot at all seasons. In sickness the patience he showed in supporting, and the abstinence he used for curing his distemper, were admirable."

stoicism. The doctrine of the school of philosophy founded by Zeno about 308 B.C. "The Stoics held that men should be free from passion and unsubdued by joy or grief."

P. 384. For the part of the love-scenes in the action, see Introduction.

P. 385. *So the pure limpid stream,* etc. The older critics found this simile most appropriate in the mouth of a Roman lady, accustomed to the sight of the yellow Tiber.

P. 386. *Scythia.* Used here as in Horace to indicate the uttermost parts of the earth.

Pp. 386-388. The indebtedness of these two scenes to the "Philippics" of Cicero has been generally recognized.

P. 389. *Reduced like Hannibal,* etc. For several years before Hannibal's suicide by poison in 183 B.C., he was a refugee at the court of Bithynia.

liberty or death. Had Patrick Henry read *Cato?*

P. 390. *Honor's a fine imaginary notion.* The contrast between Syphax's view of honor and that of Juba may be set side by side with the varying views of Falstaff and Prince Hal in 1 *Henry IV.*

ravished Sabines. The story of the rape of the Sabine women during the games at Rome in the first days of the city is fiction pure and simple.

P. 391. This simile of Mount Atlas is, as Hurd long ago remarked, fittingly addressed to an African, Syphax. Goldsmith uses a similar image in "The Deserted Village," 189-190.

P. 393. *stiffens, yet alive.* This passage in its original form was objected to by Mrs. Oldfield and was changed, at Pope's suggestion, to the line, as we now have it. (Spence's *Anecdotes.*)

P. 395. *the envenomed aspic's rage.* Compare Plutarch's account of Cato's African march: "He had likewise in his train some of the people, called Psylli, who obviate the bad effect of the bite of serpents by sucking out the poison; and deprive the serpents themselves of their ferocity by their charms."

the long laborious march. "During a continued march for seven days, Cato was always foremost, though he made use of neither horse nor chariot." (Plutarch.)

P. 396. *seized of.* Having in his possession. This is still the sense of the phrase in law.

P. 400. *the self-devoted Decii.* Three Roman leaders, grandfather, father and son, who devoted themselves to the gods Manes for the safety of their country. (B.C. 337, 296, 280.)

the Fabii. There were four great Fabii, all soldiers and consuls—the last and greatest being Hannibal's opponent. *The great Scipios.* At least a dozen warriors of this great name won for Rome some of her most splendid triumphs.

the great Censor. M. Porcius Cato (b. 232 B.C.), often called "the Elder"—to distinguish him from our hero—celebrated as a soldier and orator, spent many years of his long life on his Sabine farm, which he had inherited from plebeian ancestors. His treatise on "Agriculture" (*De Re Rustica*) is "the loose, unconnected journal of a plain farmer."

P. 401. This scene (V, i) is in close accord with what Plutarch tells us of Cato's end.

P. 402. *just.* Here the early quartos read, "good."

P. 403. The last line of the play was altered, in accord with Pope's suggestion, from its first form:

"And oh, 'twas this that ended Cato's life!"

"I believe that Mr. Addison did not leave a word unchanged that I objected to in his *Cato,*" said Pope to Spence.

THE TRAGEDY OF JANE SHORE

P. 411. *Conjunx.* . . . "Where her former husband answers her every mood."

To His Grace. . . . Charles Douglas, third Duke of Queensberry (1698-1778). His wife was Gay's patroness. His father, when Secretary of State for Scotland, made Rowe his under-secretary.

The queen and all her upstart race. Elizabeth Woodville, the widow of Edward IV. She was the daughter of the Duke of Bedford and married Sir John Grey, by whom she had two sons, later known as the Marquis of Dorset and Sir Richard Grey. Three years after Sir John's death she married Edward IV (1464), who treated her family with special favor, much to the disgust of the old nobility.

P. 415. *Pomfret.* The Queen's brother, the Earl of Rivers, and her son, Richard, were charged with conspiracy by the Duke of Gloster and were later put to death at Pomfret. The Marquis of Dorset, the other son of the queen by her first marriage, escaped and fled to Brittany.

P. 425. *Dr. Shaw.* According to Sir Thomas More, Dr. Shaw was commissioned by Gloster and his Council to preach a sermon at St. Paul's Cross in which he would signify to the people that neither King Edward himself nor the Duke of Clarence was lawfully begotten; and, on the assertion that his mistress, Elizabeth Lucy, was really his wife, that the prince and Edward's other children were illegitimate.

P. 429. *the sorcery of Edward's wife.* Compare for the same incident, *Richard III*, III, iv, 69 ff.

P. 431. *Devote the hour.* Hold the hour sacred or consecrate.

P. 433. *Can she*—Shore's emotion is too great for utterance through eight unspoken syllables.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS

P. 445. *Cymon.* See Dryden's *Cymon and Iphigenia*, ll. 216-225.

give herself a loose. Give full vent to her feelings.

vails. Gratuities to servants.

P. 446. *put upon.* Imposed upon.

The Painted Chamber. A lofty and narrow room in the old Palace of Westminster, adjoining the old House of Lords. It was so called from the paintings on the walls, representing on one side of the room the wars of the Maccabees and on the other side scenes from the life of Edward the Confessor. (Besant's *Westminster*, p. 49.)

Court of Requests. In the old Palace of Westminster; this was converted later into the House of Lords.

Nemine contradicente. Without opposition.

ridotto. An entertainment or social assembly consisting of music and dancing. It was introduced into England in 1722, the year of our play, at the Opera House in the Haymarket, and it was a marked feature of London social life during the eighteenth century. (*N. E. D.*)

Belsize. Belsize House was the forerunner of Ranelagh and Vauxhall. There were gardens in which refreshments could be obtained, and hunting, races, etc., were provided to amuse the visitors. (Mermaid Ed.)

P. 447. *twire.* Leer.

Crispo's fate. See p. 455.

P. 451. *natural.* A half-witted person.

P. 454. *Crispo or Griselda.* Operas by G. B. Bononcini, produced in 1722, with words by Rolli.

P. 455. *Signor Carbonelli.* A violinist then in high favor.

P. 457. *tenement.* Real estate held of another on any tenure.

P. 458. *liquorish.* Greedy.

P. 460. *mansion house.* The dwelling house.

messuage. A dwelling house with its outbuildings and land assigned to its use.

P. 462. *advertisement.* Notification.

P. 464. *cocker.* A supporter of cock-fighting.

P. 465. *And while abroad,* etc. From the Prologue to Southerne's *Disappointment, or The Mother in Fashion.* ll. 55-56.

P. 466. *security.* Protection.

P. 468. *table book.* Memorandum book.

P. 469. *commode.* Accommodating, in a bad sense.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

P. 479. *two most excellent ballad-singers.* In his *Polly Peachum,* Pearce advances the opinion that "the weight of hypothesis as to the origin of the musical form of the Opera is on the side of Gay's familiarity with English ballad singing, while the popularity of ballads with people of every degree ought certainly to be taken into account."

The similes that are in your celebrated Operas. Addison remarks in *Spectator,* No. 5: "The finest writers among the modern Italians . . . fill their writings with such poor imaginations and conceits, as our youths are ashamed of, before they have been two years at the University."

a prison scene, which the ladies always reckon charmingly pathetic. "Perhaps Gay had in mind the sentimental scene in Newgate prison which opens the last act of Steele's *Lying Lover.*" (Nettleton.)

St. Giles's. An almshouse near the church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields. "Custom had established yearly festivals for the ballad-singers in the classic regions of St. Giles's, which were much frequented by some of the wits of the day—Swift, Gay, Bolingbroke, Steele, etc." (Pearce.)

except our wives. Except by our wives' death.

P. 480. *Newgate.* Newgate Prison, at the corner of Old Bailey, was long the principal prison of London. Here were confined men so different as Daniel Defoe, Jack Sheppard, Titus Oates and William Penn.

P. 481. *Bagshot.* Bagshot, like Hounslow, was a favorite stamping-ground of highwaymen near London. Bagshot and Hounslow are Gibbet's companions in *The Beaux' Stratagem.*

quadrille. A card-game played by four people,—described at length by Hoyle. Our play (I, xiii, p. 486) attests the popularity of the game among women.

Marybone. Then the chief gambling-hell of London (cf. p. 499).

chap. Probably abbreviation of "chapman," merchant—here a peddler (cf. p. 500).

P. 482. *since I was pumpt.* Gay thus describes the fate of the youthful pickpocket (*Trivia,* III, 74):

> "Seized by rough hands, he's dragged amid the rout
> And stretched beneath the pump's incessant spout."

Hockley in the Hole. A famous bear-garden, "a place of no small renown for the gallantry of the lower order." (*Spectator.*)

The Old Bailey. The Criminal Court on the street of the same name,

adjoining Newgate. At 68 Old Bailey lived the notorious thief-catcher, Jonathan Wild,—the prototype of Peachum.

the ordinary's paper. The chaplain's report.

Covent-garden. Still a flower and vegetable market.

P. 484. *Drury Lane.* "Drury's mazy courts and dark abodes" (*Trivia,* III, 260). Cf. II, iii, p. 488. Goldsmith in *She Stoops to Conquer,* II, i, 184 (p. 579) refers to "the Duchesses of Drury Lane."

fuller's earth. A special kind of earth used in cleansing and thickening cloth.

Nimming. The epithet, derived from *nim,* "to steal," recalls Shakspere's Nym (*Henry* IV). The verb, *nim* (Anglo-Saxon, *niman,* "to take"), occurs later, II, x, p. 494.

P. 485. *I see him already in the cart,* etc. The passage describes the sentimental interest created by the passage of the highwayman in his cart along Holborn to the gallows-tree at Tyburn (near Marble Arch).

Jack Ketch. The traditional name of the hangman, derived from a notorious executioner (d. 1686).

Pretty Polly, say. Contemporary parody ran:

"Pretty Polly, say
What makes Johnny Gay
To call, to call his Newgate scenes
The Beggar's Opera?"

P. 486. *Air XVI.* The air, "Over the Hills and Far Away," recalls Farquhar, in whose *Recruiting Officer* it appears on the lips of Captain Plume.

atamys. A corruption for *anatomies,* "skeletons."

P. 490. *If music be the food of love, play on.* From *Twelfth Night,* I, i, 1.

lutestring. Lustring, glossy silk fabric.

padesoy. Or *paduasoy,* a strong corded silk. See *The Rivals,* p. 616.

P. 492. *Air XXVIII.* The song, "'Twas when the sea was roaring," is Gay's own (cf. *What d'ye Call It,* II, viii).

P. 493. *the ordinary.* Clergyman appointed to hold service for condemned criminals. Here, the prison chaplain.

P. 499. *lock.* "A cant word signifying a warehouse, where stolen goods are deposited." (Gay's own note.)

The Coronation account. Statement of things stolen during the Coronation festivities of George II in 1727.

P. 500. *Air XLV.* "Gay's preference for similes, derived from the animal world, is explained by his recently composed 'Fables.'" (Sarrazin.)

the mint. The mint in Southwark, which had been destroyed by act of Parliament five years before the date of our play (1723), was the resort of criminals. Compare the name, Matt of the Mint.

P. 505. *III, xvi.* In like manner Fielding discusses the fate of the puppets of his burlesque, *Tom Thumb* (p. 532). The scene is a "palpable hit at the conventional happy ending of sentimental drama and opera." (Nettleton.)

TOM THUMB THE GREAT

The following plays are mentioned in Fielding's footnotes to *Tom Thumb:*

Joseph Addison's *Cato* (1713).

John Banks's *Albion Queens,* formerly known as *The Island Queens, or the Death of Mary Queen of Scots* (1684); *Cyrus the Great, or The Tragedy of Love* (1696); *The Earl of Essex* (1682); *Virtue Betrayed, or Anna Bullen* (1682).

John Dennis's *Liberty Asserted* (1704).

John Dryden's *All for Love* (1678); *Aurengzebe* (1676); *King Arthur, or The British Worthy* (1691); *Cleomenes* (1692); *Conquest of Granada* (1670); *Don Sebastian* (1690); *Duke of Guise* (1690); *Indian Emperor* (1667); *Love Triumphant* (1694); *Rival Ladies* (1664); *State of Innocence* (1676).

Edward Ecclestone's *Noah's Flood* (1679).

Elijah Fenton's *Mariamne* (1723).

Henry Fielding's *The Coffee-House Politician* (1730).

John Fletcher's *Bloody Brother* (1640).

John Gay's *Captives* (1724).

Charles Johnson's *Medea* (1731); *Victim* (1714).

Charles Hopkins's *Female Warrior* (1697).

Nathaniel Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus* (1681); *Cæsar Borgia* (1680); *Gloriana* (1676); *Mithridates* (1678); *Nero* (1678); *Sophonisba, or Hannibal's Overthrow* (1676).

David Mallet's *Eurydice* (1731).

Thomas Otway's *Don Carlos* (1676); *History and Fall of Caius Marius* (1680).

Nicholas Rowe's *Tamerlane* (1702).

Nahum Tate's *Injured Love* (1707).

Lewis Theobald's *Persian Princess, or The Royal Villain* (1715).

James Thomson's *Sophonisba* (1730), here called *The New Sophonisba.*

Edward Young's *Busiris* (1719); *Revenge* (1721).

P. 511. *H. Scriblerus Secundus.* Henry (Fielding), the second scribbler; in imitation of Pope's *Prologomena of Martinus Scriblerus* attached to *The Dunciad* in 1729.

P. 512. *birth-day suit.* A suit worn at the celebration of the king's birthday.

giants in Guildhall. Two wooden figures (12½ feet high) carved by Saunders in 1708; they are on the right and the left in the great Hall of Guildhall.

Dr. B——y. Richard Bentley (1662-1742), the most famous Greek scholar of his day,—signally unhappy in his emendations of *Paradise Lost.*

Mr. D——s. John Dennis (1657-1734), a heavy-handed critic of the works of Addison, Steele, Rowe and others.

Mr. T——d. Lewis Theobald (1688-1744), dramatist, Shaksperean editor, and the first hero of Pope's *Dunciad.*

Mr. S——n. Either Nathaniel Salmon (1675-1742) or his brother Thomas (1679-1767), both historical and geographical writers.

Petrus Burmannus. A distinguished Dutch scholar (1668-1741), professor of Greek and politics and later at Leyden, and editor of many classical texts.

Hermes Trismegistus. The Egyptian Thoth, scribe of the gods, was accredited with the authorship of all the strictly sacred books generally called by Greek authors, Hermetic.

Justus Lipsius. (1547-1606), a famous Belgian scholar, professor successively at Jena, Leyden and Louvain.

Mr. Midwinter. The supposititious author of the ballad of Tom Thumb which Wagstaffe criticized in parody of Addison's appreciation of the ballad of Chevy Chase.

Risum. . . . You should restrain your laughter, friends.

P. 513. *Omne. . . .* Every greater contains the less, but the less cannot contain the greater.

Scaliger in Thumbo. Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609), a great Latin and Greek scholar. This work is, of course, an invention of Fielding's.

P. 514. *arrack.* An eastern name for any native spirituous liquor. "Rack" immediately below is the same word.

P. 515. *Mr. W——.* Warburton, perhaps.

That is pos'. That is certain, positive.

P. 517. *Monmouth-street.* . . . A London street where second-hand clothes were bought and sold.

P. 518. *Aristotle.* See the *Poetics,* XXI and XXII, for a discussion of diction.

Tothill Bridewell. A prison in the City for disreputable women. Cf. *The Way of the World,* V, i, p. 327.

Bajazet. A character in Rowe's *Tamerlane.*

P. 519. *O Tom Thumb.* . . . Otway's "Oh! Marius . . ." is but Shakspere's "Oh, Romeo, Romeo. . . ." (*R. and J.,* II, ii, 33.)

Bantam. In *The Author's Farce,* Act III, the hero is proclaimed as the son of Francis IV, King of Bantam, and, when his father dies, as Henry I, King of Bantam. The heroine is Henrietta, princess of Old Brentford.

King of Brentford. The kings of Brentford are burlesque characters in *The Rehearsal.* (See note to *The Beaux' Stratagem,* II, ii, p. 348.

P. 520. *lead apes in hell.* As unmarried women were compelled to do when they reached the other world. (Cf. *Much Ado,* II, i, 43, 49 f.)

P. 521. *durgen.* Dwarf.

P. 522. *Doctors' Commons.* Buildings (in which certain courts were held) of former College of Doctors of Civil Law in London. Here marriage licenses were obtained. (See note to *The Beaux' Stratagem,* II, i, p. 345.)

Fleet. Clandestine marriages were performed by disreputable parsons in the Fleet district about Ludgate Hill.

cardmatches. Pieces of card dipped in melted sulphur.

P. 523. *Mr. L——.* Nathaniel Lee, the author of *Sophonisba.*

P. 524. *Curae.* . . .

"Light cares can freely speak;
Great cares heart rather break."
(Florio's translation in Montaigne's *Essays,* I, ii.)

The quotation is taken from Seneca's *Hippolytus,* Act II, scene ii.

The Egyptian king. The story is told in Montaigne's *Essays,* Book I, chap. ii, "Of Sadness or Sorrow."

Pottle. A variant of "bottle," a bundle.

Mr. F——. Fielding.

P. 525. *My Huncamunca.* . . . Compare also *Much Ado,* III, ii, 109, 110.

P. 526. *M. Dacier.* (1651-1722). With his wife, the editor of a series of ancient texts for the use of the dauphin. He translated and annotated Horace.

Te premet. . . . "Night presses down upon thee and the storied (or unsubstantial) ghosts." (Horace, *Odes,* I, iv, 16.)

Nec quidquam. . . . "Nor was there anything more wonderful in that than a certain awful ghost, which I should far prefer to all other spectres in which English tragedy abounds" (I speak with the permission of the very learned Dionysius V).

P. 527. *Red Sea.* "Ghosts least like to be laid in the Red Sea." (See Brand's *Popular Antiquities,* III, 72.)

P. 529. *Credat Judæus Apella,* etc. "Apella, the Jew, may believe it, not I." (Horace, *Satires,* I, v, 100-101.)

THE LONDON MERCHANT

P. 538. *Sir John Eyles.* His uncle had been Lord Mayor of London in the last reign of James II; his father had been created a baronet by George I. Sir John, the second baronet, was Lord Mayor in 1727 and had represented the City in Parliament in the reign of George II. It was very fitting that this play should be dedicated to him.

P. 539. *a Tamerlane and a Bajazet.* Characters in Rowe's *Tamerlane* (1701), where they represent William III and Louis XIV.

Cato. Addison's play.

P. 540. *Sub-Governor . . . danger.* There was danger that the officials of the South Sea Company would have their property confiscated to reimburse the stockholders when the Bubble burst in 1720.

P. 541. *Mr. Cibber, Jun.* Theophilus Cibber, the son of Colley Cibber, the hero of Pope's *Dunciad.*

P. 542. *purposed invasion of our happy island.* By the Spanish Armada in 1588.

Walsingham. Sir Francis Walsingham (1530-90), Secretary of State under Elizabeth.

P. 543. *absence.* Manifestly, she means "presence."

P. 546. *apostate.* Lucifer.

P. 548. *prevented.* Anticipated.

P. 554. *that world's exotic.* Man.

P. 557. *But being dead.* "But he being dead," an absolute construction.

P. 559. *suburb-magistrates.* Magistrates outside the limits of the City. They depended on fees for their living and were notoriously corrupt.

From your destruction. . . . By destroying you (men) the betrayed woman may gain a nobler name for herself.

P. 563. *suburb-slaves.* Dwellers in the suburbs were despised by the citizens.

P. 565. *cocked up in cue.* With his hat cocked over the queue of his wig.

tawny Jew. The Jew was required to wear a yellow cap.

His flame. . . . His love-making would be no more sincere than the suit or the flattery of a creditor.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

P. 571. *Title.* The second title of the play, *The Mistakes of a Night,* was originally the only one; but, as this was felt to be undignified for comedy, others were suggested: *The Old House, a New Inn; The Belle's Stratagem* by Joshua Reynolds. Finally Goldsmith, recalling Dryden's line, "But kneels to conquer, and but stoops to rise," hit upon the present appropriate name.

P. 572. *'Tis not alone this mourning suit.* A reminiscence of *Hamlet,* I, ii, 77 f.

Shuter . . . Poor Ned. References to Edward Shuter, who played Mr. Hardcastle. Woodward, who recited the Prologue, had refused the part of Tony, which fell to Quick.

a mawkish drab. The description of sentimental comedy as "a mawkish drab of spurious breed" shows Garrick's reaction against a type of play that he had once heartily approved.

P. 573. *basket.* A receptacle for luggage at the back of stage-coaches, used occasionally for the conveyance of passengers. See also V, ii (p. 596).

Prince Eugene. Eugene of Savoy was Marlborough's ally in the War of the Spanish Succession. (Compare Southey's ballad, "The Battle of Blenheim.")

Darby . . . Joan. These traditional types of married bliss were the subjects of an eighteenth-century song.

he fastened my wig, etc. This joke was played by Lord Clare's daughter upon Goldsmith himself.

P. 575. *Would it were bed-time,* etc. A reminiscence of Falstaff's speech. (1 *Henry IV,* V, i, 125.)

Song. Tony's composition of this admirable song hardly seems consistent with his illiteracy, as Dobson has pointed out.

P. 576. *pigeon.* A gull, a dupe.

low. See Introduction.

Water Parted. A song in Arne's opera of *Artaxerxes*, 1762.

the minuet in Ariadne. At the end of the overture of this opera by Handel.

woundily. Excessively.

we wanted no ghost. Suggested by *Hamlet*, I, v, 125.

P. 577. *trapesing.* From *trapes*, "a sloven," "a slattern," used as the name of one of the worst of the women in *The Beggar's Opera.*

find out the longitude. A scientific inquiry of the time, finally solved by John Harrison, who received in the very year of Goldsmith's play (1773) his reward of £20,000.

II, i. Hardcastle's drilling of the servants recalls a well-known scene in *The Taming of the Shrew* (IV, i). The Temple editor compares the drilling by Sables of the undertaker's men in Steele's comedy, *The Funeral*, which is supposed to have furnished Goldsmith a hint of Young Marlow in its character of Lord Hardy.

P. 578. *Ould Grouse in the gun-room.* A story that no one has yet traced.

Wauns. A corruption for "swounds" or "God's wounds."

P. 579. *duchesses of Drury Lane.* Such ladies as those in *The Beggar's Opera.* (II, iii, p. 488.)

Denain. Here the French won a victory over the Allies in 1712.

P. 580. *Heyder Ally.* Sultan of Mysore (1717-1782). *Ally Cawn.* Sultan of Bengal. *Ally Croaker.* A popular Irish ditty.

Westminster Hall. In Goldsmith's day, and for a century later (until 1882), the scene of the Law Courts.

the battle of Belgrade. Here the Turks were beaten, August 16, 1717.

pruin. Prune.

P. 581. *florentine.* "A made dish of minced meats, currants, spices, eggs, etc., baked." *A shaking pudding.* A jelly.

taffeta cream. A dish suggesting the thin glossy silk called taffeta.

the laws of marriage. This reference to the Royal Marriage Act of 1772, which prevented the legal marriage of the Duke of Gloucester and Lady Waldegrave, was greeted with loud applause.

P. 583. *Ranelagh, St. James or Tower Wharf.* The humor of Hastings' references to London localities, like those of Mrs. Hardcastle in the next speech, lies in the jumble of fashionable resorts and places of low repute. Tower Wharf and The Borough (Southwark) are social leagues away from Ranelagh gardens at Chelsea, or the Pantheon on Oxford Street.

the Scandalous Magazine. The Town and Country Magazine, then celebrated for its *Tête-à-Tête* portraits. See *The School for Scandal*, I, i, p. 646.

since inoculation began. Inoculation was introduced into England from Turkey in 1721.

Gothic. Barbarous.

P. 584. *crack.* Lie.

Quincy. The author of a *Complete English Dispensatory*, very popular in the eighteenth century.

P. 585. *Anon.* What do you say?

mauvaise honte. Shamefacedness.

Bully Dawson. A Whitefriars ruffian, whom Sir Roger "kicked in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster." (*Spectator*, No. 2.)

P. 586. *Morrice.* Off with you!

marcasites. A mineral, much in use for ornaments at this time, and closely resembling gold or silver ore.

table-cut. With flat surfaces.

P. 587. *Cherry.* For Goldsmith's indebtedness to Farquhar, see Introduction.

P. 588. *The Lion,* etc. These are common names of inn-rooms. Cf. *The Beaux' Stratagem,* I, i, p. 341.

the Ladies' Club. Goldsmith had in mind "the Female Coterie" of Albemarle Street.

P. 589. *Miss Biddy Buckskin.* Her original was a friend of Walpole and a member of the Ladies' Club, Miss Rachel Lloyd.

I never nicked seven, etc. I never bet on seven, that I did not throw both aces (ames-ace), the lowest throw upon the dice, three times—i.e., I always played in hard luck.

would discover my name. Is not Goldsmith nodding here? Hardcastle already knows Hastings' name (II, i, 204).

P. 591. *liberty and Fleet Street.* "Suggested by the then popular cry of 'Wilkes and Liberty.'" (Dobson.)

the Rake's Progress. . . . Hogarth's celebrated engravings, published in 1735.

P. 592. *The Dullissimo Maccaroni.* The London maccaronis or fops of the day were caricatured in prints, sold in all the shops. See the reference to the name in "Yankee Doodle." Cf. *The School for Scandal,* II, ii, p. 653.

haspicholls. A popular vulgarism for harpsichords.

P. 593. *feeder.* Cock feeder.

P. 594. *baskets.* Single-sticks with basket-hilts.

P. 596. *rabbit.* Humble (< Fr. *rabattre*).

P. 600. *We have our exits,* etc. Taken from *As You Like It,* II, vii, 141.

Nancy Dawson. A popular song of the day.

Che faro. The opening words of an air in Gluck's opera of *Orfeo,* 1764.

Heinel. A Prussian danseuse, a popular favorite in this year.

spadille. The ace of spades, high card in ombre and quadrille.

Bayes. Character in Buckingham's *Rehearsal* representing Dryden, the laureate. Here used as a synonym of "dramatist."

Second Epilogue. "This came too late to be spoken." (Note in First Edition.) The writer, Joseph Cradock of Gumley, was a warm friend of Goldsmith. Two other epilogues, one representing a quarrel between Mrs. Bulkley, who played Miss Hardcastle, and Mrs. Catley, were drawn up by Goldsmith, but were never used.

Sadler's Wells. A pleasure garden at Islington near the New River Head.

THE RIVALS

Our text of *The Rivals* follows the first edition of 1775, reproduced by Adams in 1910. (See Bibliography.)

P. 608. *The poet's brief again.* The play revised and produced after its failure on its first presentation ten days before.

P. 609. *Cast.* Overthrow in a lawsuit.

amend our plea. Revise our play.

sons of Phœbus. Poets.

the Fleet. The famous debtors' prison in London.

No writ . . . Drury-lane. There is no appeal through writ of error from this theater, Covent Garden, to the other one, Drury-lane.

newsman. Newspaper reporter.

P. 610. *this form.* The figure of Comedy on one side of the proscenium in the Covent Garden Theatre; on the other side was the figure of Tragedy.

Pilgrim's Progress . . . rue. The emblems of moral purpose and repentance, which dominate the sentimental tragedy.

Woodward . . . Green. Actors in the performance of the revised play.

their favorite. The figure of Tragedy.

P. 611. *Odd's.* God's.

Z——ds. Zounds, a contraction for God's wounds.

P. 612. *thread-papers.* Strips of thin, soft paper folded in creases so as to form separate divisions for different skeins of thread. (*N. E. D.*)

a set of thousands. A team of usually six horses costing thousands of pounds.

mort. A great deal.

High-roomians and Low-roomians. Patrons respectively of the Upper and the Lower Rooms of the Bath Assemblies, between which at this time there was considerable rivalry.

Pump-Room. The Room where all Bath met to drink the mineral waters and to gossip.

ton. Style.

ta'en to his carrots. Appears in his own red hair.

bob. A wig with short curls.

Gyde's Porch. The Lower Rooms kept by Mr. Gyde.

Mr. Bull. A Bath bookseller in 1785. (Nettleton.)

Mr. Frederick. A Bath bookseller.

Pp. 612-614. Lydia Languish's Books.

The Reward of Constancy. Conjectured by Nettleton to be identical with *The Happy Pair; or Virtue and Constancy Rewarded.* A novel by Mr. Shebbeare, c. 1771.

The Fatal Connection. A novel by Mrs. Fogerty (1773).

The Mistakes of the Heart; or, Memoirs of Lady Caroline Pelham and Lady Victoria Nevil. By Treyssac de Vergy (1769).

The Delicate Distress. A novel in letters by Mrs. Griffith (1769).

The Memoirs of Lady Woolford. Written by herself and addressed to a friend (1771).

The Gordian Knot. A novel in letters by Mr. Griffith, the husband of the author of *The Delicate Distress* above (1769).

Peregrine Pickle and Humphry Clinker. Novels by Tobias Smollett, the former 1751, the latter 1771. *Peregrine Pickle* includes *The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality.*

The Tears of Sensibility. Novels translated from the French of M. D'Armaud by John Murdoch (1773).

The Sentimental Journey. By Laurence Sterne (1768).

The Whole Duty of Man. Of uncertain authorship (1660). A new and revised edition was extensively advertised in 1773.

Roderick Random. By Tobias Smollett (1748).

The Innocent Adultery. A translation of Paul Scarron's *L'Adultère Innocente* (1722).

Lord Aimworth. The History of Lord Aimworth and the Honorable Charles Hanford, Esq., in a series of letters (1773).

The Man of Feeling. By Henry Mackenzie (1771).

Mrs. Chapone. Letters on the Improvement of the Mind. Addressed to a Young Lady. By Mrs. Chapone (1773).

Fordyce's Sermons. Sermons to Young Women (1765).

Lord Chesterfield's Letters. Letters written by the Earl of Chesterfield to his son, Philip Stanhope, published by Mrs. Eugenia Stanhope (1774). Nettleton has done more than any other editor in identifying the books in Lydia's library.

P. 613. *blonds.* A silk lace of two threads, twisted and formed in hexagonal meshes. (*N. E. D.*)

rout. A large evening party or reception.

P. 616. *paduasoy.* Strong corded silk fabric much worn in the eighteenth century.

pocket-pieces. Coins carried in the pocket as a charm.

disbanded chairmen. Unemployed bearers of Sedan chairs or wheelers of invalid chairs.

minority waiters. Probably waiters out of work. (Adams.)

P. 617. *reversion.* The right of ultimate succession to an estate.

P. 618. *the German Spa.* Spa is a watering-place in Belgium near the German border; it was at the height of its fame in the eighteenth century. (See *The School for Scandal,* II, ii, p. 615.)

squallante . . . quiverante. Burlesque Italian musical terms.

minnums and crochets. Half-notes and quarter-notes.

Go, gentle gales. The refrain of *The Faithful Lover,* given in *Clio and Euterpe, or British Harmony* (1762), vol. iii, p. 1:

"Go, gentle gales,
Go, bear my sighs away,
And to my love
The tender notes convey."
(Nettleton.)

My heart's my own. A song in Isaac Bickerstaffe's *Love in a Village,* I, i.:

"My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice."
(Nettleton.)

P. 619. *race-ball.* A dance held in connection with the races.

looby. A lubberly fellow, a lout.

frogs and tambours. Frogs were military coat fastenings of spindle-shaped buttons and loops; tambours are embroidered stuffs.

P. 621. *Bull in Coxe's Museum.* "The Curious Bull" was one of the mechanical curiosities exhibited in Bath in 1773-4 by Mr. Coxe, a London jeweller.

turnspit. A long-bodied, short-legged dog formerly used to turn the spit.

P. 624. *the Grove.* The Orange grove near the Parades, so named from the Prince of Orange.

P. 627. *doubt.* Suspect.

P. 628. *an'.* If.

monkeyrony. David's pronunciation of "maccaroni," a dandy.

Oons. God's wounds. Cf. *Zounds.*

balancing and chasing and boring. Steps in dancing. (Adams.)

coupee. A dance step formerly much used; the dancer rests on one foot and passes the other forward or backward, making a sort of salutation. (*N. E. D.*)

P. 629. *Allemandes.* German dances.

we wear no swords here. The Bath regulations against duelling were so strict that no swords were allowed to be worn in public. (Cf. V, ii, 1.)

the new room. The new assembly rooms were opened in 1771.

pinchbeck. An alloy of copper and zinc used in cheap jewelry.

"I could do such deeds." A misquotation probably of Lear's "I will do such things." (II, iv, 283.)

P. 630. *King's Mead-fields.* An extensive meadow to the west of the city. (Adams.)

sharps and snaps. Swords and pistols used in duelling.

P. 632. *What Hamlet says:*

"Hyperion curls, the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill."
(III, iv, 56-59.)

P. 633. *Bedlam.* A corruption of St. Mary of Bethlehem, the famous London hospital for the insane.

Youth's the season, etc. See Gay's *Beggar's Opera,* II, iv.

P. 634. *still.* Always.

P. 635. *Spring Gardens.* A pleasure resort on the east bank and on the other side of the river from the city.

P. 636. *not unsought be won.* Milton's *Paradise Lost,* viii, 502-503:

"Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
That would be wooed, and not unsought be won."

P. 638. *Smithfield bargain.* A sharp or roguish bargain; also, a marriage of interest in which money is the chief consideration. (*N. E. D.*) Smithfield was formerly a cattle market.

Scotch parson. Eloping couples could more easily be married in Scotland than in England.

P. 639. *fire-office.* Really a fire-insurance office, "but here, of course, misused by David in a way worthy of Mrs. Malaprop." (Nettleton.)

putrefactions. For petrifactions, which were found abundantly in Derbyshire.

sword . . . Bath. See note on III, iv, p. 629.

P. 641. *Abbey.* The abbey church of Bath.

P. 644. *cit.* Citizen.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

Our text follows Sheridan's manuscript of *The School for Scandal,* as printed in the editions of Rae and Nettleton. (See Bibliography.)

P. 645. *vapors.* Low spirits.

quantum sufficit. As much as suffices.

sal volatile. An aromatic solution taken for faintness.

poz. Slang for "positive."

dash and star. Used instead of names in scandalous news items.

P. 646. *Dramatis Personæ.* The part of "Miss Verjuice" was, in later versions, merged in that of "Snake." "Spunge" became at once "Trip."

Lappet. This part of the Maid is withdrawn in later versions.

demirep. A woman of suspected reputation.

a Tête-à-Tête . . . Magazine. The Tête-à-Tête column in *The Town and Country Magazine, or Useful Repository of Knowledge, Instruction, and Entertainment,* was devoted to accounts of scandals in fashionable society. (See *She Stoops to Conquer,* II, i, p. 583.)

P. 647. *execution.* Seizure of goods in default of payment.

P. 649. *Petrarch's . . . Sacharissa.* Laura was the object of Petrarch's (1304-1374) love verses, and Sacharissa (Lady Dorothy Sidney) of Waller's (1605-1687).

P. 650. *Tunbridge.* Tunbridge Wells, a pleasure resort about thirty-five miles southeast of London.

Old Jewry. A London street in the heart of the City, so named from the Synagogue which stood here prior to the persecution of the Jews in 1291. (Baedeker.)

Tontine. A tontine is an annuity shared by subscribers to a loan, the shares increasing as the subscribers die till the last survivor gets all. In 1773 the great increase of the Irish national debt led to the establishment of the Tontine Annuities and Stamp Duties by which immediate needs were met.

doubt. Rather think, suspect.

P. 652. *the Pantheon.* A concert hall in Oxford Street.

Fête Champêtre. An open-air fête or festival.

tambour. A circular frame on which silk or the like is stretched to be embroidered.

Pope Joan. A card-game which survives to-day in a modified form as New Market.

fly cap. A kind of head-dress resembling an overgrown butterfly with outstretched wings.

Vis-à-vis. A kind of carriage in which persons sit facing each other.

P. 653. *rid on hurdles.* Condemned criminals rode on carts to their place of execution.

clippers of reputation. The allusion is to those who clipped the edges of coins.

High park. Hyde Park.

macaronies. Dandies. The quatrain was taken from some earlier verses, which are given in Fraser Rae's *Life,* I, 330-331.

Phœbus. As the god of poetry.

P. 654. *the Ring.* A fashionable drive round an enclosed space in Hyde Park about 350 yards in length.

P. 655. *Spa.* See note on *The Rivals,* II, i, p. 618.

Law Merchant. Mercantile law.

P. 656. *Cicisbeo.* A gallant in attendance upon a married lady.

P. 657. *jet.* The real point, the gist.

"*A tear . . . charity.*" Quoted from 2 *Henry IV,* IV, iv, 81-82. The original has "open as day."

P. 658. *Crutched Friars.* A street near the Tower of London, named after the convent of the Crossed or Crouched Friars.

P. 659. *annuity bill.* A bill was passed in May, 1777, "providing that all contracts with minors for annuities shall be void, and that those procuring them and solicitors charging more than ten shillings per cent. shall be subject to fine or imprisonment." (Matthews.)

P. 661. *Bags.* A small silken pouch to contain the back hair of the wig. (*N. E. D.*)

throws off faster. Nobody discards faster from his wardrobe. (Nettleton.)

mortgage . . . post-obit. Legal terms that Charles's servant would be familiar with.

point. Point-lace.

hazard. A game of chance with dice.

P. 663. *bough-pots.* Pots for holding flowers or boughs.

P. 664. *race-cups and corporation-bowls.* Cups won at races and bowls given by the Corporation of the city.

P. 665. *What do you bid?* Part of the fun of this auction scene lies in the fact that the auction is a farce, since there is only one bidder, who with only one exception accepts the price set on the pictures.

Kneller. A famous portrait painter (1646-1723) of royal and noble personages.

woolsack. The cushion on which the Lord Chancellor sits in the House of Lords; here applied to the law generally.

P. 667. *Draw that screen,* etc. When Lady Teazle later hides behind the

screen, she will, of course, expose herself to the "maiden lady of so curious a temper."

P. 672. *Sir Peter,* etc. Charles's speech is not so heartless as it seems at first sight, for he believes that everyone present has been guilty of dissimulation while he has been acting innocently. The situation is penetrated with a very grim humor on the verge of tragedy, just as Lady Teazle has been on the verge of her own moral destruction.

P. 673. *rupees, pagodas.* A rupee is equal to two shillings, a pagoda to about seven.

avadavats. The more usual form is "amadavat," an Indian song bird brown in color with white spots. (*N. E. D.*)

Indian crackers. Indian fire-crackers "tastefully got up with colored paper." (*Notes and Queries,* 6th Series, II, 199.)

P. 675. *thrust in second.* "A term in fencing for 'a thrust, parry, or other movement downward toward the left.'" (Nettleton.)

Montem. "The montem was a triennial ceremony of the boys at Eton, abolished only in 1847. It consisted of a procession to a mound (ad montem) near the Bath road, where they exacted money from those present and from all passers-by. The sum collected, sometimes nearly £1,000, went to the captain or senior scholar, and served to pay his expenses at the university." (Matthews.)

P. 678. *A. B.'s at the coffee-house.* Cf. the modern practice of giving initials in advertisements to be answered by addressing to the care of the newspaper office.

P. 679. *sold me judges,* etc. Sir Oliver repeats himself from IV, ii.

P. 680. *Mr. Colman.* George Colman, proprietor of the Haymarket Theatre and writer of plays.

Bayes. The name given to the caricature of Dryden in Buckingham's *Rehearsal,* a burlesque, like Sheridan's *Critic,* of extravagant fashions in the drama. Here it is synonymous with dramatist or poet, as in the Epilogue to *She Stoops to Conquer.*

P. 681. *loo.* An eighteenth-century card-game.

vole. Winning of all tricks in the game.

Seven's the main. In the game of hazard the main is the number (from 5 to 9) called by the caster before he throws the dice.

hot cockles. A game in which one person lay or knelt down with his eyes covered and on being struck by the others in turn guessed who struck him.

Farewell, etc. A parody on Othello's "Farewell," III, iii, 347-357.

card drums. Card parties.

spadille. The ace of spades.

pam. The knave of clubs.

basto. The ace of clubs in quadrille and ombre.

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